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## LA SINALEFA ENTRE VERSOS EN LA VERSIFICACIÓN ESPAÑOLA

### I

EN un estudio publicado en esta revista diez años ha, *Notes on the Versification of El Misterio de los Reyes Magos*,<sup>1</sup> traté de demostrar que la sinalefa era un fenómeno muy bien conocido en la antigua versificación castellana. En vista de tantos ejemplos seguros de sinalefa en el *Misterio de los Reyes Magos* y en otros monumentos poéticos anteriores al siglo XIV quedaba para mí desbaratada la extraordinaria teoría de Federico Hanssen, que negaba la existencia de la sinalefa en la antigua versificación, y que declaraba que los primeros ejemplos seguros los presenta el Arcipreste de Hita.<sup>2</sup> Aunque yo fuí quien por

<sup>1</sup> THE ROMANIC REVIEW, vol. VI, 1915, páginas 378—401. El estudio detallado de todos los casos de hiato y de sinalefa en el *Misterio* se halla en páginas 395—399. Hay en el *Misterio* unos noventa y nueve casos de vocales concurrentes, de los cuales sesenta y tres son hiatos y treinta y seis son sinalefas. Aun quitando del número de los casos que hemos leído con sinalefa unos dos o tres que pueden leerse de otra manera, todavía quedan unos treinta y tres o treinta y cuatro casos de sinalefa en el *Misterio*, o sea, más del treinta por ciento de todos los casos de vocales concurrentes. En el *Misterio* la sinalefa y el hiato están por consiguiente en la relación de 1 a 2. Estò era en el siglo XII. En el siglo XVI, con Juan del Encina, la relación era sinalefa 9, hiato 1. En la versificación moderna la relación es sinalefa de 96 a 99, hiato 1 a 4.

<sup>2</sup> Véase mi estudio ya citado, página 399, nota número 65, que cita las publicaciones de Hanssen donde afirma y vuelve a afirmar varias veces su teoría. Esta fué anunciada por primera vez en 1896, en su artículo, *Sobre el Hiato en la antigua Versificación castellana*, *Anales de la Universidad de Chile*. En su *Gramática histórica de la Lengua Castellana*, Halle, 1913, § 102, declara positivamente que los primeros ejemplos seguros de la sinalefa en la versificación castellana se encuentran en el Arcipreste de Hita. Cuando ya ve su teoría desbaratada, y además, cuando observa los numerosos casos de sinalefa no sólo en el *Misterio* sino que también en el *Libro de Alejandro*, Hanssen inventa una nueva teoría, todavía más extraordinaria que la

primera vez se opuso en un trabajo especial a la teoría de Hanssen, no era yo, por cierto, el único que la rechazaba. En 1902 el erudito profesor de la Universidad de Chicago, el Dr. Karl Pietsch, en su publicación, *Preliminary Notes on two Old Spanish Versions of the Disticha Catonis*,<sup>3</sup> página 25, nota 81, declaraba firmemente que no creía en la teoría de Hanssen, y al mismo tiempo que yo publicaba mi estudio sobre las vocales concurrentes del *Misterio de los Reyes Magos*, Menéndez Pidal nos ofrecía el texto del antiguo poema *Elena y María* y afirmaba que había que leer los versos con sinalefa y no con hiato.<sup>4</sup> Repito y afirma lo que he dicho ya en mis publicaciones ya citadas: *la sinalefa era un fenómeno muy bien conocido y de uso frecuente en la versificación castellana desde sus primeros monumentos poéticos*. Pasemos ahora al estudio de la sinalefa entre versos.

## II

La versificación románica está en relación directa con la versificación latina. La versificación castellana heredó de la latina no sólo la asonancia y la rima, sino que también el isosílabismo y hasta los grupos rítmicos de acento fundamentales.<sup>5</sup> La sinalefa era un fenómeno bien conocido y muy empleado en primera, a saber, que todas las sinalefas del *Misterio* y del *Libro de Alejandro* (y todas las demás de la antigua versificación?) no son sinalefas sino elisiones. Véase su artículo, *La elisión y la sinalefa en el Libro de Alejandro, Revista de Filología Española*, tomo III, 1916, páginas 345-356, y el artículo mío, *Synalepha in Old Spanish Poetry: A Reply to Mr. Lang*, en *THE ROMANIC REVIEW*, vol. VIII, 1917, páginas 88-98. En resumen, hay que decir adiós para siempre a la teoría que negaba la existencia de la sinalefa en la antigua versificación castellana y que acogida por Stengel en la *Krit. Jahresbericht*, IV, I, página 380, y por otros, ha sido aceptada ciegamente por algunos hispanófilos que han tenido la temeridad de publicar ediciones de antiguos textos españoles ajustándose absolutamente a ella, haciendo correcciones en los manuscritos para que salga el hiato apetecido y desaparezca la sinalefa, demostrando de esta manera su escaso conocimiento de una de las leyes fundamentales de la versificación castellana, y tímida y apologéticamente affirmando de cuando en cuando que en el español antiguo existía tal vez la sinalefa si las vocales concurrentes eran idénticas.

<sup>3</sup> *The University of Chicago, The Decennial Publications*, vol. VII, páginas 193-231.

<sup>4</sup> *Elena y María, Revista de Filología Española*, tomo I, 1914, páginas 52-96. Véase en particular página 94.

<sup>5</sup> El verso sálico, por ejemplo, empleado por Horacio, era regularmente un verso de once sílabas. El tipo de,

Iam satis terris nivis atque dirae  
grandinis misit Pater, et rubente (I, II.)

la versificación latina y la versificación castellana lo continúa juntamente con otros factores fundamentales de la versificación. De la misma manera la sinalefa entre versos existía también en la versificación latina, y no es de extrañar, por consiguiente, que la encontremos también en la castellana.

A la sinalefa entre versos los latinos llamaban *synapheia*. Aunque el fenómeno no era tan frecuente como la sinalefa ordinaria en el medio del verso, la *synapheia* no era rara. Basten los siguientes ejemplos:

I. Sobra una sílaba al final del verso y hay que enlazarla con la vocal inicial del verso que sigue:

iactemur doceas: ignari hominumque locorumque  
erramus; (Virgilio, *Eneida*, I, 332.)  
Iam licet venias marite,  
uxor in thalamo tibi est. (Catulo, 61, 191.)

II. Sobra una sílaba al principio del verso y hay que enlazarla con la vocal final del verso que precede:

labitus ripa Iove non probante u-  
xorius amnis. (Horacio, I, II.)  
Flere desine. Non tibi, Au-  
runculeia, periculum est. (Catulo, 61, 86.) \*

### III

Todos los casos de la sinalefa entre versos que hemos encontrado en la versificación española son del tipo latino II, es decir, la vocal que sobra en la medida silábica se halla al principio del verso y hay que enlazarla con la final del verso que precede. El uso más frecuente se encuentra en las combinaciones métricas donde hay sólo versos cortos de tres, cuatro o cinco sílabas, o

llevaba invariablemente el acento en las sílabas 1, 4 y 10. Prescindiendo del factor cuantitativo este tipo de verso era en realidad un verso endecasílabo llano, igual al verso románico de este nombre cuyo ejemplo más antiguo en romance es el verso de la *Chanson de Roland*, o sea el tipo - - - 4 - - - 10 -. Este verso latino es silábico y lleva los acentos ya definitivamente determinados.

\* Véase Luciani Muelleri, *De Re Metrica*, Petropoli et Lipsiae, 1894, páginas 352-356.

donde los versos cortos alternan con otros más largos. Entre versos largos iguales los casos son muy raros.

Los primeros ejemplos de la sinalefa entre versos en la poesía española son del siglo XIV y se encuentran en las coplas de pie quebrado en las cuales alternan octosílabos y tetrasílabos. No daremos ejemplos de Juan Ruiz por no entrar en problemas de interpretación textual, pero hay algunos seguros en sus cantares. Para el siglo XIV los únicos ejemplos que ahora daremos son los siguientes de Pedro de Veragüe, *Doctrina de Discripción*:<sup>7</sup>

52	Por estos vados pasando Y   ras en paz.	— - - - - 7 - — - 3
58	Alma y cuerpo condepna A   todo mal.	— - - - - 7 - — - 3
111	Presta mente sey mañoso en   te partir.	— - 3 - - - 7 - — - 3
148	E por synple quien se moja He   non lo siente.	— - 3 - - - 7 - — - 3 -

Hay que observar que el pie quebrado repite, generalmente, el primer grupo rítmico del verso anterior o forma el primer grupo rítmico del verso que sigue. Es decir, la pausa final del pie quebrado coincide por lo general con la pausa que sigue al primer grupo rítmico del verso octosílabo. En estos versos el grupo que verdaderamente determina el ritmo es un grupo silábico que consiste en cuatro sílabas, la tercera siempre acentuada, — - 3 - . Establecido de esta manera el esquema rítmico de estos versos resulta perfectamente natural la sinalefa entre versos. La sinalefa entre versos es absolutamente necesaria. La exige no solamente el número exacto de las sílabas del verso sino que también el ritmo mismo.

<sup>7</sup> Publicada por R. Foulché-Delbosc en la *Révue Hispanique*, tomo XIV, páginas 565-597.

## IV

Pasemos ahora al siglo XV cuando los casos son muy numerosos. Ya queda dicho que todos los ejemplos que hemos encontrado de esta época se encuentran en las combinaciones métricas donde los versos quebrados de cuatro sílabas alternan con los de ocho. Hay varios tipos. La concordancia entre el pie quebrado y el octosílabo que le precede en cuanto a los acentos es notable y muy general, pero no absoluta. Hay también que observar que esta concordancia rítmica es menos general entre el pie quebrado y el octosílabo que le sigue aunque con éste vaya unido por la rima. Puesto que, como se verá más adelante, la sinalefa se halla siempre entre el pie quebrado y el octosílabo que precede o sigue damos sólo estos dos versos como tipo métrico. El tipo perfecto en su concordancia de acentos es el que sigue. Los ejemplos son de los *Proverbios* y de *Diálogo de Bias contra Fortuna* del Marqués de Santillana. A este tipo llamaremos TIPO A.

Marqués de Santillana, *Proverbios*:<sup>8</sup>

I	
Fijo mio mucho amado,	- - 3 - - - 7 -
para mientes,	- - 3 -
2	
Si querras, seras querido,	- - 3 - - - 7 -
ca temor	- - 3 -
II	
Ca de fecho deliberado	- - 3 - - - 7 -
non se atiende	- - 3 -

Marqués de Santillana, *Bias contra Fortuna*:<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Todos los textos de las obras del Marqués de Santillana, de Frey Iñigo de Mendoza y de Fernán Pérez de Guzmán que citamos son de la *Nueva Biblioteca de Autores Españoles*, Tomo 19: *Cancionero Castellano del siglo XV*, ordenado por Foulché-Delbosc, Tomo I, Madrid, 1912. Los números indican en la medida silábica las sílabas que llevan el acento al final de cada grupo rítmico. En el TIPO A el grupo que determina el ritmo es el pie quebrado. El verso octosílabo es en realidad dos grupos, y con el tetrasílabo hay tres: *en error que—non quisiera en—continente*, o sea, - - 3 - | - - 3 - | - - 3 - .

I	
Como. $\widehat{E}$ piensas tú que non?	— — 3 — — — 7 —
verlo has.	— — 3
2	
Sojudgados soys a mí	— — 3 — — — 7 —
los humanos.	— — 3 —
35	
Quieres do $\widehat{el}$ Apolo nasce	— — 3 — — — 7 —
Muy de grado	— — 3 —

Siguen ahora ejemplos de sinalefa entre versos del TIPO A.  
Marqués de Santillana, *Proverbios*:

9	
en error que non quisiera	— — 3 — — — 7 —
$\widehat{en}$   continente,	— — 3 —
59	
bien morir es por fazafña	— — 3 — — — 7 —
$\widehat{e}$   de fazer.	— — 3 —
63	
que del dar, lo más honesto	— — 3 — — — 7 —
$\widehat{es}$   brevedad.	— — 3 —
78	
mas espera su cayda	— — 3 — — — 7 —
$\widehat{e}$   mal inmenso;	— — 3 —
80	
que non vengas por ventura	— — 3 — — — 7 —
$\widehat{en}$   pobredad?	— — 3 —

Marqués de Santillana, *Bias contra Fortuna*:

10	
Ca si juntas son riqueza	— — 3 — — — 7 —
$\widehat{e}$   caridad	— — 3
96	
e las leyes que dexó	— — 3 — — — 7 —
$\widehat{el}$   espartano	— — 3 —

Marqués de Santillana, *Cancionero Castellano*, ya citado, páginas 530-569:

de quien fuste consolada	- - 3 - - - 7 -
e   favorida:	- - 3 -
más honesta e más sentida	- - 3' - - - 7 -
e   más graciosa.	- - 3 -
de cuydados mas que farto	- - 3 - - - 7 -
e   dolorido	- - 3 -
pero yo deseo a tí	- - 3 - - - 7 -
en   buena fe.	- - 3 -
En tan buen ora te vi	- - 3 - - - 7 -
e   te fable	- - 3 -
que del todo te me di	- - 3 - - - 7 -
en   buena fe	- - 3 -
Sospiando iba la niña	- - 3 - - - 7 -
e   non por mi,	- - 3 -

Frey Iñigo de Mendoza, *Cancionero Castellano*, ya citado, páginas 72-78:

que la gente castellana	- - 3 - - - 7 -
es   tan ufana	- - 3 -
es muy poco poderosa	- - 3 - - - 7 -
y   prouechosa	- - 3 -
sy la carne no es regida	- - 3 - - - 7 -
y   sometida	- - 3 -
para ver lo venidero	- - - - - 7 -
y   postrimero	- - 3 -
por lo qual los del concejo	- - 3 - - - 7 -
al   tiempo viejo	- - 3 -
tornó flaco lo valiente	- - 3 - - - 7 -
en   continente	- - 3 -

Algunos de estos ejemplos que terminan en vocal acentuada pueden leerse con compensación en vez de sinalefa, porque,

claro es, después de la vocal final acentuada puede haber una o dos sílabas sin acento:

e las leyes que dexó   el	- - 3 - - - 7 -
espartano	- - 3 -
en tan buena hora te vi   e	- - 3 - - - 7 -
te fable	- - 3

Ejemplos como los que acabamos de dar hay también en los versos de Jorge Manrique, Pero Guillén de Segovia y otros poetas de la época. Hasta ahora hemos escogido solamente los casos de sinalefa entre versos que pertenecen al TIPO A, un tipo de versos pareados en cuanto a la concordancia de acentos. Ahora pasamos al tipo más general y más numeroso y el que más numerosos ejemplos nos ofrece de sinalefa entre versos, el tipo de par de versos donde la concordancia de acentos no es absoluta. Hay combinaciones métricas donde los versos o pies quebrados de cuatro sílabas van pareados y otras donde alternan con los octosílabos. A este tipo de versos donde no se observa la concordancia de acentos del TIPO A, llamaremos TIPO B. Siguen algunos ejemplos.

Marqués de Santillana, *Proverbios*:

O fijo, sey amoroso,	5	- - - - - 7 -
e   non esquivo;		- - 3 -
revuelve, trastorna e gira	20	- - - - - 7 -
en   continente		- - 3 -
e siempre te falla presto	58	- - - - - 7 -
a   bien morir		- - 3 -
los vicios de mancebia	95	- - - - - 7 -
e   mocedad		- - 3 -

Marqués de Santillana, *Cancionero Castellano*, páginas 556-569:

antes que yo te dejara	- - - - - <u>7</u> -
<u>i</u>   dola mia,	- - <u>3</u> -
Recuerdate que padesco	- - - - - <u>7</u> -
<u>e</u>   padesci	- - <u>3</u> -
e sesso e saber perdi	- - - - - <u>7</u> -
<u>en</u>   buena fe	- - <u>3</u> -

No damos más ejemplos del TIPO B por ser tan numerosos. Cualquiera que se dé la molestia de examinar los versos del siglo XV los encontrará a menudo. En Jorge Manrique hay más de una docena en páginas 96-116 de *Antología de Poetas Líricos Castellanos* de Menéndez y Pelayo, tomo III.

En las estrofas de tres versos, los dos primeros de cuatro sílabas y el tercero de ocho la sinalefa entre los versos de cuatro sílabas es muy frecuente. Siguen algunos ejemplos de Fernán Pérez de Guzmán; *Cancionero Castellano*, páginas 698-702. El tipo métrico de la estrofa es el que sigue:

Alma mya,	- - <u>3</u> -
noche e dia	- - <u>3</u> -
loa la Virgen Maria.	- - - - - <u>7</u> -

#### Ejemplos de sinalefa:

del maluado	- - <u>3</u> -
<u>e</u>   grant pecado	- - <u>3</u> -
Quien se inclina	- - <u>3</u> -
<u>a</u>   la muy fina	- - <u>3</u> -
que aplaze	- - <u>3</u> -
<u>e</u>   satisfaze	- - <u>3</u> -
ca su gloria	- - <u>3</u> -
<u>e</u>   su vitoria	- - <u>3</u> -
Syempre exora	- - <u>3</u> -
<u>es</u>   ta señora	- - <u>3</u> -
O beata,	- - <u>3</u> -
<u>in</u>   temerata	- - <u>3</u> -

Si padesco,	- - 3 -
a   ti gradesco	- - 3 -
Si penado	- - 3 -
a   tribulado	- - 3 -
O señora,	- - 3 -
a   quien adora,	- - 3 -

En la última estrofa de las *Cient trinadas a loor de la Virgen María*, de donde hemos sacado todos los ejemplos de Pérez de Guzmán, hay sinalefa entre los versos primero y segundo y entre el segundo y el tercero:

e tu guyá	- - 3 -
el   alma mia	- - 3 -
a   la celestial via.   Amén.	- - - - - 7

En estas coplas de pie quebrado de Pérez de Guzmán, como en otras del mismo tipo hay concordancia absoluta entre los acentos de los tetrasílabos. Los tres versos llevan la misma rima. El ritmo de estas coplas tiene tanta solemnidad y espiritualidad que su belleza no ha sido superada en la poesía castellana.

Los siguientes ejemplos son del *Cancionero de Costantina*.<sup>9</sup> Se hallan en combinaciones métricas muy variadas, pero todos los ejemplos se encuentran entre versos de cuatro y ocho sílabas.

17 gloria do mi gloria mora	- - - - - 7 -
y   parayso,	- - 3 -
18 lumbre que la mia ciega	- - - - - 7 -
y   desbarata	- - 3 -
32 por nosotros espiraste	- - 3 - - - 7 -
en   el madero	- - 3 -
35 tornare glorificado	- - 3 - - - 7 -
en   dias dos	- - 3 -
48 vuestro el pecado y indicio	- - - - - 7 -
y   quiso Dios	- - 3 -

<sup>9</sup> *Cancionero de Juan Fernández de Costantina*, Sociedad de Bibliófilos Madrileños, Madrid, 1914. El número de la página va indicado a la izquierda.

53 yo nada tema la muerte	- - - - - 7 -
y   pueda verte	- - 3 -
54 pues no nacida naciste,	- - - - - 7 -
y   mereciste	- - 3 -
105 ante otra valerosa,	- - 3 - - - 7 -
es   mas de mas	- - 3 -
154 esta orden tenebrosa	- - 3 - - - 7 -
en   que me vedes	- - 3 -
161 con la mas alta tristeza,	- - 3 - - - 7 -
y   no postizos,	- - 3 -
185 de la tinta con que escriuo	- - 3 - - - 7 -
el   mal que tengo	- - 3 -

Los mejores ejemplos de la sinalefa entre versos que podríamos dar de la última mitad del siglo XV y de los primeros años del siglo XVI son los siguientes de Juan del Encina. Se encuentran en general en las mismas condiciones que los anteriores. Los ejemplos son tomados de *Teatro Completo*.<sup>10</sup>

32 ¿Hoy en este día?	Sí.	- - 3 - - - 7
Y   no le vi!		- - 3
75 ¡Carnal fuera! ¡Carnal fuera!		- - 3 - - - 7 -
Es   pera, espera.		- - 3 -
79 Y asomó por otra parte		- - 3 - - - 7 -
el   estandarte		- - 3 -
287 Hoy parió la su vecina		- - 3 - - - 7 -
y   se lo vende.		- - 3 -
374 E si estuviese cenando		- - - - - 7 -
y   de recuesto,		- - 3 -

## V

Durante los siglos XVI y XVII la sinalefa entre versos no es tan frecuente como en el siglo XV, pero los ejemplos son

<sup>10</sup> *Teatro Completo de Juan del Encina*, Edición de la Real Academia Española, Madrid, 1893. El primer caso puede ser compensación y no sinalefa, como ya queda explicado.

todavía bastante numerosos. Se encuentran generalmente en las mismas condiciones que en el siglo XV. Siguen algunos ejemplos notables:

Cristóbal de Castillejo:<sup>11</sup>

110a	En la una va labrada	- - <u>3</u> - - - 7 -
	En   perfección	- - <u>3</u>
110b	Barrenadas van primero	- - <u>3</u> - - - 7 -
	A   mano llena;	- - <u>3</u> -
123b	Estarán a tu servicio	- - <u>3</u> - - - 7 -
	Y señorío.	- - <u>3</u> -
149a	Honesta, contemplativa	- - - - - 7 -
	Y   muy devota;	- - <u>3</u> -
188a	Vez que se vió colorada	- - - - - 7 -
	Y   vergonzosa;	- - <u>3</u> -
191a	Sin ser caso reservado,	- - <u>3</u> - - - 7 -
	A   gún momento	- - <u>3</u> -
192b	Porque yo los conocí	- - <u>3</u> - - - 7
	En   su morada	- - <u>3</u> -

Francisco de Figueroa:<sup>12</sup>

94a	Habló aquella deidad santa	- - <u>3</u> - - - 7 -
	A   sus amados;	- - <u>3</u> -
94a	Sin cometer sacrilegio,	- - <u>3</u> - - - 7 -
	En   un tesoro.	- - <u>3</u> -
94a	Reprehendiendo cuanto pasa	- - <u>3</u> - - - 7 -
	En   cualquier parte?	- - <u>3</u> -
94a	La alcahueta, la hechicera	- - <u>3</u> - - - 7 -
	Y   la perdida?	- - <u>3</u> -
95b	Fortunilla lisonjera,	- - <u>3</u> - - - 7 -
	En   tenderás	- - <u>3</u> -
95b	Ni muy hermosa ni fea,	- - - - - 7 -
	En   que tendrás	- - <u>3</u>

<sup>11</sup> Poetas Líricos de los Siglos XVI y XVII, Tomo I, B. A. E., vol. 32, Madrid, 1854.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid. Tomo II, B. A. E., vol. 42, Madrid, 1857.

No es necesario dar más ejemplos. Seguramente se encuentran los ejemplos en todos los poetas que escribían versos con estas combinaciones. En los autos y farsas hay muchísimos ejemplos, semejantes a los que ya conocemos de Juan del Encina. La célebre composición poética de Quevedo, la letrilla satírica, *Poderoso caballero Es don dinero* es un ejemplo muy notable de la sinalefa entre un verso octosílabo y un pie quebrado de cuatro sílabas porque los dos versos van unidos por la rima. Lo curioso es que la rima del primer verso va estropeada, al parecer, por la añadidura de la sílaba *es*, que no pertenece al segundo sino al primer verso. Estos dos versos hay que leerlos, por consiguiente de esta manera:

<i>Poderoso caballero</i> <i>Es   don Dinero.</i>	$\text{---} \frac{3}{-} \text{---} \frac{7}{-}$ $\text{---} \frac{3}{-} \text{---}$
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Hay aquí, como en las demás combinaciones métricas semejantes, tres grupos rítmicos, cada uno dominado por una sílaba de acento fuerte,

<i>Poderoso</i> <i>caballero</i> <i>don Dinero</i>	$\text{---} \frac{3}{-} \text{---}$ $\text{---} \frac{3}{-} \text{---}$ $\text{---} \frac{3}{-} \text{---}$
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y el oído percibe y la mente comprende también un grupo mayor, que podemos, si queremos, llamar verso, como sigue:

*Poderoso caballero es don Dinero. ---*  $\frac{3}{-} \text{---} \frac{7}{-} \text{---} \frac{11}{-}$

Otros ejemplos muy interesantes, pero en general, idénticos a los anteriores se encuentran en los tomos II y IV de *La Verdadera Poesía Castellana* de Cejador.<sup>13</sup> Véase por ejemplo, tomo II, páginas 46-52. Hay también muchos ejemplos en *Romancero y Cancionero Sagrados* de Justo Sancha.<sup>14</sup>

Pero en los siglos XVI y XVII hay algunos ejemplos nuevos de sinalefa entre versos. Se encuentra también entre versos iguales. Entre versos de cuatro sílabas vemos algunos ejemplos

<sup>13</sup> *La Verdadera Poesía Castellana, Floresta de la Antigua Lírica Popular, recogida y estudiada por D. Julio Cejador y Frauca, 5 tomos, Madrid, 1921-1924.*

<sup>14</sup> *B. A. E.*, Madrid, 1855.

en la composición número 2151 del tomo IV de la obra de Cejador, ya citada:<sup>15</sup>

que escarchado	- - 3 -
y   perfilado	- - 3 -
que el ganado	- - 3 -
al   borotado	- - 3 -
su trinado	- - 3 -
el   hamorado	- - 3 -
a   zucarado	- - 3 -
venerado	- - 3 -
y   celebrado	- - 3 -

Más notable es el caso de sinalefa entre versos iguales de seis sílabas que encontramos en los dos primeros versos, también unidos por la rima, de *Ande yo caliente* de Góngora, y que se repite seis veces más entre octosílabo y hexasílabo:

Ande yo caliente,	1 - - - 3 -
y   riase la gente.	1 - - - 5 -
naranjada y aguardiente,	- - 3 - - - 7 -
y   riase la gente.	1 - - - 5 -
que en el asador reviente,	- - - - - 7 -
y   riase la gente.	1 - - - 5 -
del rey que rabió me cuente,	- - - - - 7 -
y   riase la gente.	1 - - - 5 -
sobre el chopo de la fuente,	- - 3 - - - 7 -
y   riase la fuente.	1 - - - 5 -
la regalada corriente,	- - - - - 7 -
y   riase la gente.	1 - - - 5 -
y la espada sea mi diente,	- - 3 - - - 7 -
y   riase la gente.	1 - - - 5 -

<sup>15</sup> Igual procedimiento hemos visto en algunos versos de Fernán Pérez de Guzmán en el siglo XV; y en los siglos XVIII y XIX se repite como más adelante veremos.

No hay ni un solo caso de los siete donde no haya sinalefa entre la conjunción y la vocal final del verso que precede.

Seguramente estos ejemplos no son los únicos que hay de sinalefa entre versos iguales en la poesía castellana de los siglos XVI y XVII. Son los únicos que nosotros tenemos a la mano. En resumen, la sinalefa entre versos durante los siglos XV-XVII es muy frecuente entre versos octosílabos y de cuatro sílabas o de pie quebrado, y se encuentra también entre los octosílabos y los hexasílabos. Entre versos iguales la hemos hallado entre versos de cuatro y entre versos de seis sílabas.<sup>16</sup>

## VI

Del siglo XVIII en adelante la sinalefa entre versos va cayendo poco a poco en desuso, y en la versificación moderna es rarísima. Esto no es debido a que las leyes de la versificación hayan cambiado o que haya aversión a ella de parte de los poetas. La verdad es que en general la poesía española moderna admite la sinalefa en el verso casi sin restricción alguna y que el hiato es una cosa rara y excepcional. Lo que pasa es que del siglo XVIII en adelante las coplas de pie quebrado en las cuales abundaban los ejemplos en los siglos anteriores han caído en desuso y en la poesía moderna son muy raras.

### Ejemplos del Siglo XVIII.

José Somoza, *Epístolas*:<sup>17</sup>

<sup>16</sup> D. Felipe Robles Dégano, que ha escrito uno de los mejores tratados de versificación castellana, aunque todavía dominado hasta cierto punto por la tradición clásica, *Ortología Clásica de la Lengua Castellana*, Madrid, 1905, había ya llamado la atención a la existencia de la sinalefa entre versos en la poesía castellana; §§ 129-130. El señor Robles Dégano, sin embargo no admite que haya en castellano versos tetrasílabos o de pie quebrado, y considera, al parecer, a estos casos de sinalefa como sinalefa en medio del verso, aunque él mismo nos da dos ejemplos de sinalefa entre octosílabos y uno entre hexasílabo y endecasílabo. Estos mismos y los que yo he citado entre hexasílabos y entre octosílabos y hexasílabos nos prueban definitivamente que la sinalefa entre versos no se limita a los casos de octosílabos y pies quebrados de cuatro sílabas, aunque entre éstos ocurra con mayor frecuencia. La verdad es que entre los versos de cuatro sílabas es bastante frecuente hasta en el siglo XIX y que la nota del señor Robles Dégano al pie de página 117 tiene poco fundamento. Es evidente que cuando Caramuel decla, "Quam (synalepham) auris postulat in hoc carminum genere (coplas de pie quebrado) postulat in aliis omnino non tolerat," hablaba con poco conocimiento de los hechos. Y lo mismo que decimos de sinalefa entre versos podemos decir acerca de la compensación, que trataremos en otra ocasión.

<sup>17</sup> *Poetas Líricos del Siglo XVIII*, ed. Cueto, Tomo III, B. A. E., vol. 67, Madrid, 1875.

470a	Entre un torbellino ciego Y   mar mudable.	- - - - - 7 - - - 3 -
470a	Dignidades y opulencia Es   la ventura	- - 3 - - - 7 - - - 3 -
470a	De más estima, nobleza Y   calidad:	- - - - - 7 - - - 3 -
470a	El de la naturaleza y   la verdad.	- - - - - 7 - - - 3 -

Joaquín Lorenzo Villanueva, *Canciones*:<sup>17</sup>

597b	El hijuelo que ha perdido, Y   va tras él;	- - 3 - - - 7 - - - 3 -
598a	La caída repentina En   tu carrera?	- - 3 - - - 7 - - - 3 -
598a	De mi mal, que no te olvida, Y   de ti cura,	- - 3 - - - 7 - - - 3 -

En el siglo XVIII hay también ejemplos de sinalefa entre versos tetrasílabos, como en los siglos anteriores. Ejemplos:

Eugenio Gerardo Lobo:<sup>18</sup>

32a	Ya ha vencido El   vano ruido	- - 3 - - - 3 -
	Del sentido Y   las potencias,	- - 3 - - - 3 -
32a	Ya más quieto	- - 3 -
	Va sujeto Ha cia el objeto	- - 3 - - - 3 -
	Que desea,	- - 3 -
32a	Ya su vida, E nardecida	- - 3 - - - 3 -
	Con la herida	- - 3 -
	De mis flechas,	- - 3 -

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, Tomo I, Madrid, 1869.

El siguiente ejemplo, de Francisco Sánchez Barbero, ocurre entre versos trisílabos:<sup>19</sup>

Me incita,	- 2 -
Me inflama	- 2 -
La llama	- 2 -
De amor.	- 2 -
Me grita	- 2 -
El acento	- 2 -
Sangre	- 2 -
De honor.	- 2 -

Ejemplos del siglo XIX. Coplas de pie quebrado.  
José Zorrilla:<sup>20</sup>

61a Y abajo en la yerba verde	- - - - - 7 -
Al   fin la pierde	- - 3 -
61a Así la mora decía,	- - - - - 7 -
Y   respondía	- - 3 -
84a Y sobre la luz se tiene	- - - - - 7 -
En   ronco vuelo.	- - 3 -
84a Concibe la luz incierta	- - - - - 7 -
El   pensamiento.	- - 3 -
89a En la márgen se le inclina,	- - 3 - - - 7 -
Y   como crece	- - 3 -
118a Y si alegre, entretenida	- - 3 - - - 7 -
Es tás, ¡mi vida!	- - 3 -
145a A Dios; duerme, mi sultana,	- - 3 - - - 7 -
Y   tu ventana,	- - 3 -

Espronceda:<sup>21</sup>

52 Le volviste placentero;	- - 3 - - - 7 -
Y   con doloso	- - 3 -

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, Tomo II, Madrid, 1871.

<sup>20</sup> *Obras de D. José Zorrilla*, ed. Ildefonso de Ovejas, Tomo I, *Obras Poéticas*, Garnier, París, s.a.

<sup>21</sup> *Obras Poéticas de don José de Espronceda*, París, 1900.

## Entre versos de cuatro sílabas.

Espronceda:<sup>21</sup>

75	Y dé pecho	- - 3 -
	A   mi valor.	- - 3 -
77	Y del trueno	- - 3 -
	Al   son violento,	- - 3 -
	Y del viento	- - 3 -
	Al   rebramar,	- - 3 -
82	Y si pena	- - 3 -
	Y   descuidado	- - 3 -
83	Ni me obligó	- - 3 -
	A a   gradecer;	- - 3 -
83	Dar limosna	- - 3 -
	E   s un deber.	- - 3 -
208	¿Qué rumor	- - 3 -
	Lejos suena,	- - 3 -
	Que el silencio	- - 3 -
	En   la serena	- - 3 -
	Negra noche interrumpió?	- - 3 - - 7 -

Al dar el último ejemplo hemos citado la estrofa entera para que sirva de ejemplo de lo que ya hemos dicho sobre lo natural que resulta la sinalefa entre versos cuando la pide el ritmo de los versos. Si al poeta se le hubiera ocurrido dividir el último verso en dos como los anteriores hubiera resultado una estrofa de seis versos de cuatro sílabas en vez de cuatro de cuatro y un octosílabo, y en ese caso hubiera sinalefa entre los dos últimos versos de la misma manera que entre el tercero y el cuarto:

Negra noche	- - 3 -
In terrumpió.	- - 3

Un verso, después de todo, no es sino un grupo rítmico bien definido. Cuando se repiten estos grupos de una manera algo regular el resultado es una serie de grupos rítmicos semejantes o idénticos, y eso es el ritmo en la poesía.

## VII

En la poesía moderna la sinalefa entre versos es rarísima. Pero todavía hay algunos versificadores que siguen la antigua manera de rimar y admiten la sinalefa entre versos. Siguen algunos ejemplos notables.

Ricardo León:<sup>22</sup>

52	supe mirar, y cegué en hondo abismo;	- - - - - 7 - - 3 -
52	¡del misterio de la vida y   de la muerte!	- - 3 - - - 7 - - - 3 -

Ramón del Valle-Inclán, *Versos de Job*:<sup>23</sup>

467	toda la vida es mudanza has ta estar muerto!	- - - - - 7 - - - 3 -
	¡Quién vió por tierra rodado e  almenar	- - - - - 7 - - - 3 -
	y tan alto levantado el   muladar!	- - 3 - - - 7 - - - 3 -

Hay cuatro ejemplos más en esta composición.

Rubén Darío, *Prosas Profanas*:<sup>24</sup>

184	¿A qué comparar la pura ar quitectura . . .	- - - - - 7 - - - 3 -
185	La blanca pareja anida a dormecida:	- - - - - 7 - - - 3 -

## VIII

Queda establecida la existencia de la sinalefa entre versos en la poesía española con numerosos ejemplos desde principios del siglo XIV hasta el día de hoy. Es un fenómeno importante en la versificación y su estudio puede servir para aclarar otros problemas métricos que todavía no conocemos muy bien.

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<sup>22</sup> *Alivio de Caminantes*, en Tomo I de sus *Obras Completas*, Madrid, 1915.

<sup>23</sup> *Parnaso Español Contemporáneo*, ed. José Brissa, Barcelona, 1914.

<sup>24</sup> Rubén Darío, *Obras Completas*, Editorial Mundo Latino, vol. II, Madrid.

## DECADENCE AND RIMBAUD'S SONNET OF THE VOWELS

SINCE decades Rimbaud's famous *Sonnet of the Color of the Vowels* has had the privilege of stirring critics to lyrical indignation. They discovered in it proof sufficient of the accusation that Rimbaud suffered from a nervous disease, from sensorial hallucinations which brought him to attribute colors to the vowel-sounds: "A, noir; E, blanc; I, rouge; U, vert; O, bleu. . . ." He has been indicted for attempting to demolish the barriers that separate neatly the several arts, for confusing poetry with painting and music; for accelerating the dissolution of the French language, for a number of other esthetic, philosophical and moral sins. His sonnet has grown to be the very Symbol of Decadence. It is supposed to have thrown a spell over the modern poets of a dozen countries and to have inspired their anarchical attempts at painting with words through the orchestration of colored vowels! It deserves, then, richly the honor of a commentary, the more that none of the several biographers of Rimbaud has studied it with any degree of precision:

"A noir, E blanc, I rouge, U vert, O bleu, voyelles,  
Je dirai quelque jour vos naissances latentes,  
A, noir corset velu des mouches éclatantes  
Qui bombillent autour des puanteurs cruelles,  
Golfe d'ombre; E, candeur des vapeurs et des tentes,  
Lance des glaciers fiers, rois blancs, frissons d'ombelles,  
I, pourpre, sang craché, rire des lèvres belles  
Dans la colère ou les ivresses pénitentes;  
U, cycles, vibrements divins des mers virides,  
Paix des pâlis semés d'animaux, paix des rides  
Que l'alchimie imprime aux grands fronts studieux;  
O, suprême Clairon plein de strideurs étranges,  
Silences traversés des Mondes et des Anges,  
—O, l'Oméga, rayon violet de ses Yeux!"

This variation upon the esthetic possibilities of the alphabet is a sign of contradiction in the criticism of modern poetry. It plays for the epoch of the Symbolists the same rôle as the unforgettable and unavoidable scarlet waistcoat of Théophile Gautier in the history of Romanticism: It has become the emblem of all the revealed and of all the hidden extravagance of which the Symbolists have been accused. Or, rather, it has played several rôles. It was and it is a standard joke for young journalists who just "break into literature"; it was a revelation and a gospel to many a young poet, penning his first *Symphony in Silver-grey and Apple-green*; it is to bewildered critics another horrifying example of the degeneration of modern life and art; it is to the psychologist a welcome document on *synesthesia*, on the association of sound and color, on color-audition. . . .

Yet, it merits neither this excess of honor, nor all this indignation. Rimbaud wrote it, not as his definite gospel of a new esthetics, but merely as the notation of a fleeting perception. E. Delahaye, his bosom friend, testifies: "Is it necessary to add that Rimbaud has never had the slightest intention of making this sensation the basis of a literary system? He said very simply—he, who was simple to the highest degree: I believed that I saw, sometimes I believed that I felt, in that way, and I say so, I narrate it because I find that as interesting as anything else." (*Rimbaud*, 1905, p. 80, note 1.) And Gustave Kahn also stresses the fact that the sonnet represents but a document on a passing state of mind and feeling of Rimbaud: "Le sonnet des voyelles ne contient pas plus une esthétique qu'il n'est une gageure, une gaminerie pour étonner le bourgeois. Rimbaud traversa une phase où tout altéré de nouveauté poétique, il chercha dans les indications réunies sur les phénomènes d'audition colorée quelque rudiment d'une science des sonorités. Il vivait près de Charles Cros, à ce moment hanté de sa photographie des couleurs et qui put l'orienter vers des recherches de ce genre."<sup>1</sup> Rimbaud merely exaggerated in his sonnet, to the extreme and the paradoxical, the well-known fact that certain colors may vaguely suggest sound or music, or, vice-versa, that certain sounds evoke a tenuous sensation of

<sup>1</sup> *Symbolistes et Décadents*, p. 275.

coloration. We speak every day of a "loud necktie," a "shrieking color," of "mellow tones," without being suspected of a nervous ailment. Moreover, the poetical vocabulary of all periods shows traces of more or less clearly expressed synesthesia. Virgil speaks of "clamore incendere coelum, urbem," to set afame the sky, the city by shrieking; he uses expressions as "incendere luctus," to kindle plaints. Examples from other poets are over-abundant.<sup>2</sup>

Verlaine has declared that the sonnet of Rimbaud was "un peu fumiste," that it was more or less of a joke; but it must be remembered that Verlaine was far less intellectual than Rimbaud, and that there were parts in the young poet's nature that escaped him. He agrees, in any case, that it was not intended as a new esthetic gospel. Gustave Kahn has treated it as "an amusing paradox, stressing one of the *possible* concordances of things," and not at all as definite system. And Rimbaud himself, far from proclaiming it as a positive theory, has made sport of it very soon after having written it: "History of one of my follies . . . I invented the color of the vowels! A black, E white, etc. . . . I regulated the correct use and the tempo of each consonant and, with the help of instinctive rhythms, I believed that I was inventing a poetic diction accessible, sooner or later, to all senses. . . . It was at first a study; I wrote down silences, nights; I noted the music of the inexpressible, I fixed vertigoes. . . . I reserved the rights of translation" (*Une Saison en Enfer*). The sonnet of the vowels was to Rimbaud but a half-serious phantasy, in which he believed but poetically, so to speak, and as long as the exaltation of the senses lasted. His own utterances prove that, if he believed in his theory, he did not believe in it long. It is entirely gratuitous to suppose that he intended this sonnet as the foundation of a new esthetics, in which sensuous refinement would be uppermost and destroy the life of the intellect.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> The Sanscrit roots *Gha*, *gag* and *ghar* denote at the same time sound and color. Darmesteter notes of the root *su*, with the complementary roots *sphar*, *sta*, *stan*, *star*, *svak*, *svan*, etc.: "Cette racine et les racines qui en dépendent offrent parallèlement le sens de briller et celui de retentir, qui ont pour point de départ commun le sens de: éclater aux yeux et aux oreilles."

<sup>3</sup> Rimbaud's evolution was steadily toward a more intellectualistic attitude of mind. See f. i. his *Chanson de la plus haute Tour*.

Moreover,—and this point seems to be of some importance in solving the riddle of the sonnet,—it is sufficient to read it carefully to perceive that even there the theory of the relation of sound to color has not been applied. Rimbaud does not rely upon the suggestion of color by means of sound, but upon the imaginative accumulation of colored objects, whatever the sound of the word that depicts them. Let us take the sound E (*e*), for instance:

“E candeur des vapeurs et des tentes,  
Lance des glaciers fiers, rois blancs, frissons d'ombelles. . . .”

The sound E (*e*) is represented but once in these lines, in the word *glaciers*. The suggestion of whiteness is not obtained through the orchestration of the sound *e*, but very traditionally, through the successive evocation of silvery-white and resplendent objects: mists and tents, the lances of the proud glaciers, white kings, shuddering clusters of blossoms. In fact, Rimbaud follows here no other method than Sainte-Beuve's in *Les Rayons jaunes*.

The whole poem is constructed in the same way. In the lines devoted to the vowel U (*y*) one discovers but one U (*y*) whereas the sound I (*i*) occurs at least a dozen times:

“U, cycles, vibrations divins des mers virides,  
Paix des pâlis semés d'animaux, paix des rides  
Que l'alchimie imprime aux grands fronts studieux. . . .”

Some of the “disciples” of Rimbaud must have perceived that he did not put into practice his momentary theory of color-audition. A modern American poet, Mr. Gould Fletcher, has attempted to produce in English an improved edition of the sonnet in which he tried to apply consistently the theory of color and sound relation. Amy Lowell in her *Tendencies of Modern American Poetry* claims that Mr. Gould Fletcher is therefore more logically Rimbaud than Rimbaud himself.<sup>4</sup> “There are dangerous disciples” as the proverb has it! It is always dangerous to give a corrected edition of the work of a man of deep originality or genius.

But a much more unpropitious “disciple” of Rimbaud is

<sup>4</sup>P. 117.

René Ghil, who, in his *Traité du Verbe*, has taken the sonnet as the expression of a fixed system in which each letter, or each combination of letters, corresponded necessarily to certain colors. He aimed at the glory of becoming a "chef d'école," and expounded his ideas with the dogmatic intolerance of a leader. It is mainly because of his rather vociferous theorizing that the whole group of the French Symbolists has been accused of having gone mad on the powers of suggestion and of writing synesthetic verse, evoking only vague visions and tender-tinted dreams. But the sober truth is that there exists but very little verse of this nature in the abundant work of the Symbolists. Its principal representatives are almost entirely free of it. Moreover,—a point that is generally overlooked,—René Ghil was not one of the Symbolists. On the contrary, he founded his School and promulgated his new *Art Poétique* as a definite protest against their tenets. He has declared his intentions with sufficient emphasis:

"L'on me sait ennemi absolu, autant que des recommenceurs fades des maîtres romantiques et parnassiens, de ceux dits 'décadents et Symbolistes,' ambitions isolées et frappées d'impuissance, et qu'o'n décore improprement du titre d'Ecole. . . . C'est affirmer son impuissance qu'être Symboliste. . . . Et l'on voudrait dire que c'est l'Avenir, ça! l'Avenir qui sera tout à l'expérimentation, qui sera basé scientifiquement . . . etc."

He proclaimed himself Chief of an *Ecole évolutive-instrumentiste*, absolutely opposed to Verlaine, Mallarmé, Moréas and all the other Symbolists.<sup>5</sup> He proclaimed the creation of an intellectualistic poetry, based upon the doctrine of Evolution and upon the physical theories of Helmholtz. And, in more marked contrast still with the Symbolists, he rejected the doctrine of Art for Art's sake to glorify a kind of social and humanitarian poetry: "Ce n'est plus l'art pour l'art. C'est l'art altruiste, en but humanitaire, pour le Mieux intellectuel et moral."<sup>6</sup> His theories and his work do not prove that the tendencies of Symbolism were disastrous for life and art. If they prove anything at all beyond the fact that René Ghil was mistaken, it would be that some of its opponents were quite

<sup>5</sup> Huret, *Enquête sur l'Evolution littéraire*, pp. 110-111.

<sup>6</sup> Huret, *op. cit.*, p. 113.

extravagant in their reaction. In any case, Rimbaud cannot be held responsible for René Ghil's exaggerated systematizing of the color-audition of the *Sonnet des Voyelles*.

What is the origin of this famous sonnet? The phenomenon of association of sound and color which it describes is well known and has been abundantly studied. It is not at all a "terra incognita" where mysterious nervous diseases flourish. Rimbaud may have possessed the gift (or the short-coming, if you like) of being synesthetic. He may have had a rather permanent and constant perception of the relation between sound and color, or his sonnet may have been created by a more or less accidental esthetic impression, fleeting and uncertain. Or, again, it may have been suggested by his readings. Long before his time an imposing number of studies on color-audition had appeared and one of them may have called his attention to that phenomenon, whether he was personally more or less blessed with it or not. Moreover, he was acquainted with Charles Cros, who made a specialty of all studies on color-phenomena.

It is well known that already in 1650 the German Jesuit Anathasius Kircher held that if one could see the air when stirred by the melodies of songs and instruments, one would perceive a mingling of the most beautiful colors.<sup>7</sup> Newton studied the phenomenon in his *Optics*,<sup>8</sup> and with the universal fame which he soon obtained, these ideas became almost commonplace during the eighteenth century. Voltaire, whom nobody will accuse of being of a mystical, symbolist, decadent or even sentimental disposition, took over Newton's ideas on the subject, and expounded them with eulogy in his *Elémens de la Philosophie de Newton*. No undue prominence must be given to the invention of a color-organ by the original and paradoxical Father Castel, or to his project of constructing a *Clavecin des odeurs*, or, rather, *des parfums*. The color-organ was built in such a way that when a key was struck, at once a blind opened and strong lights projected on a white wall a certain color which harmonized with the sound of the note. The organ of perfumes performed the same service by opening and closing successively

<sup>7</sup> *Musurgia universalis, sive Ars magna consoni et dissoni*, 1650.

<sup>8</sup> Book I, Part II, Propositions 3 and 6.

a number of boxes of perfumes each of which corresponded to a musical sound. Father Castel had worked out a complete system of correspondences between sound and color, far more elaborate and dogmatic than Rimbaud's: "Green corresponds to *re*, and will make them (the audience) feel that this note *re* is natural, rural, sprightly, pastoral. Red, which corresponds to *sol*, will give them the idea of a warlike note, bloody, angry, terrible. Blue, corresponding to *do*, will give them the impression of a note that is noble, majestic, celestial, divine. . ." The inventions of Father Castel are, however, nothing more and nothing else than the inventions of Father Castel, and from them nothing can be deduced for the indictment of modern poetry or modern life. Not only in the domain of synesthesia, but in several other domains did his restless and inventive mind evolve the most extraordinary paradoxes, a collection of which has been gathered as *Esprit, Saillies et Singularités du P. Castel* (1763). He had a natural impulse to the extreme and his theories cannot be taken as typical or representative. His other invention, that of a new wall-paper or tapestry, of which the colors would be blended in such way as to suggest the music of dances or even of entire operas, shows conclusively that he was generalizing from his own personal perceptions of the relations between sound and color, which are non-existent for the majority of other onlookers.

But what his "case" proves is that Rimbaud and the Symbolists have invented nothing whatsoever in the realm of synesthesia. They are not decadent because they referred to these uncertain and vague impressions: long before them both the practice and the theory of these "correspondences" had been carried much further than they ever dreamed of carrying them. Locke, whom no one will accuse of being decadent, speaks of a blind man who felt the blast of a trumpet as a splash of sharp-red color. In the works of the Romantic period the examples of color-audition are very numerous: one finds them in the works of Hoffmann, Tieck, Poe, Goethe, de Musset,<sup>9</sup> de Nerval and in many others. Baudelaire's sonnet *Concordances* is well known; Sainte-Beuve wrote his *Rayons Jaunes*, a poem built

<sup>9</sup> He had long discussions with his family on the color of the notes.

upon the successive images which yellow tints evoked in him.<sup>10</sup>

Yet, it may be argued, those "happy few" who perceive the tenuous relations between sound and color are unavoidably found among those sensitive souls that are, so to speak, born to Romanticism. Could one imagine more robust natures and sturdier minds approving of such delicate intertwining of sensations? Granting even that synesthesia is no indication of decadence or of a nervous disease, it is yet not the appanage of certain emotional and high-pitched natures without much intellectual vigor? Could one imagine intellectualists like Goethe or Voltaire as even conceiving of such subtle emotional complexities?

Now, Goethe belongs among the early sympathetic students of the phenomenon, and Voltaire accepted the theory without his habitual sarcastic scepticism toward anything transcending "common sense" experience. In his *Eléments de la Philosophie de Newton* (Ed. of 1738, p. 146) he describes the analogy between the tonalities of music and color and even adds a folding plate to illustrate the theory which he discovered in Newton. In his and Newton's system, *re* corresponds to violet; *mi* to purple; *fa* to blue; *sol* to green; *la* to yellow; *si* to orange, and *do* to red. Voltaire adds:

"Cette analogie secrète entre la lumière et le son, donne lieu de soupçonner que toutes les choses de la nature ont des rapports cachés, que peut-être on découvrira quelque jour. Il est déjà certain qu'il y a un rapport entre le Toucher et la Vue, puisque les couleurs dépendent de la configuration des parties; on prétend même qu'il y a eu des Aveugles-nés, qui distinguaient au toucher la différence du noir, du blanc et de quelques autres couleurs."

It must be noted that these additional embellishments on the theory of color-audition have been added by Voltaire himself and are not found in Newton's *Optics*.<sup>11</sup> It is rather fortunate that it is Voltaire who wrote this passage, for if it had been written by Verlaine, Mallarmé, Rimbaud or Baudelaire, it would have been interpreted by now as one of the major proofs of the decadence of modern poetry. Moreover, Voltaire even praised

<sup>10</sup> See on this poem, Barre, *Le Symbolisme*, pp. 40-43.

<sup>11</sup> Voltaire, *op. cit.*, pp. 147-48.

Father Castel's color-organ, although with some reservations as to its practicality, and arrived at once to a saner appreciation of his theories than many a modern critic:

"Un philosophe ingénieur a voulu pousser ce rapport des sons et de la lumière peut-être plus loin qu'il ne semble permis aux hommes d'aller. Il a imaginé un clavecin oculaire qui doit faire paraître successivement des couleurs harmoniques, comme nos clavecins nous font entendre des sons: il y a travaillé de ses mains, il prétend enfin qu'on joueroit des airs aux yeux. On ne peut que remercier un homme qui cherche à donner aux autres de nouveaux arts et de nouveaux plaisirs. Il y a eu des Pays où le Public l'auroit récompensé. Il est à souhaiter, sans doute, que cette invention ne soit pas, comme tant d'autres, un effort ingénieur et inutile: ce passage rapide de plusieurs couleurs devant les yeux semble peut-être devoir étonner, éblouir et fatiguer la vue; nos yeux veulent peut-être du repos pour jouir de l'agrément des couleurs. Ce n'est pas assez de nous proposer un plaisir, il faut que la nature nous ait rendus capables de recevoir ce plaisir: c'est à l'expérience seule à justifier cette invention. En attendant il me semble que tout esprit équitable ne peut que louer l'effort et le génie de celui qui cherche à agrandir la carrière des Arts et de la Nature" (*op. cit.*, p. 168).

We catch here Voltaire approving ideas which in recent times have been considered specifically as Rousseauistic, as some of the multiple mistakes of taste for which Jean-Jacques has been made responsible by the modern crusaders against his doctrines and his influence. Professor Irving Babbitt in *The New Lao-koon, An Essay on the Confusion of the Arts*, states (p. 173):

"The latest dictionary of music dismisses color-audition curtly by the remark that 'Rousseau's *Essay on the Origin of Language*, . . . gives the germ of subsequent absurdities regarding the alleged analogies between tones and colors.'<sup>12</sup> Rousseau says in this essay, it is true, that 'sounds are never more effective than when they produce the impression of colors'; and he is evidently on the way, like Diderot, to all our modern confusions."

So far Professor I. Babbitt. This opinion occupies an important place in his anti-Rousseauistic doctrine and serves to identify Jean-Jacques with some over-sensitive and complex forms of modern art. Yet, it is indeed astonishing that, in the

<sup>12</sup> Stokes' *Encyclopaedia of Music*, by L. J. de Bekker, p. 567. Rousseau's remark does not have the significance here attributed to it, as will be shown farther on.

incriminated *Essai sur l'origine des Langues*, Rousseau does not at all defend color-audition. On the contrary, in this very essay, Rousseau devotes a whole chapter to the *refutation* of color-audition. In contrast with Voltaire he disapproves as much of Father Castel's color-organ as any of the anti-Rousseauists. Professor Babbitt in his fundamental opposition to the confusion of music and painting agrees fully with Rousseau, but he disagrees with Voltaire. Rousseau said:

"*Fausse analogie entre les couleurs et les sons.*—Il n'y a sortes d'absurdités auxquelles les observations physiques n'ont donné lieu dans la considération des beaux arts. On a trouvé dans l'analyse du son les mêmes rapports que dans celle de la lumière. Aussitôt on a saisi vivement cette analogie, sans s'embarrasser de l'expérience et de la raison. L'esprit de système a tout confondu, et faute de savoir peindre aux oreilles on s'est avisé de chanter aux yeux. J'ai vu ce fameux clavecin sur lequel on prétendait faire de la musique avec des couleurs. C'étoit bien mal connoître les opérations de la nature, de ne pas voir que l'effet des couleurs est dans leur permanence, et celui des sons dans leur succession."

"Toutes les richesses du coloris s'étaient à la fois sur la face de la terre. Du premier coup-d'œil tout est vu; mais plus on regarde et plus on est enchanté. Il ne faut plus qu'admirer et contempler sans cesse. Il n'en est pas ainsi du son: la nature ne l'analyse point et n'en sépare point les harmoniques; elle les cache au contraire sous l'apparence de l'unisson, ou, si quelquefois elle les sépare dans le chant modulé de l'homme et dans le ramage de quelques oiseaux, c'est successivement et l'un après l'autre: elle inspire des chants et non des accords, elle dicte la mélodie et non de l'harmonie. . . . Ainsi chaque sens a son champ qui lui est propre. Le champ de la musique est le temps, celui de la peinture est l'espace. Multiplier les sons entendus à la fois, ou développer les couleurs l'une après l'autre, c'est changer leur économie, c'est mettre l'œil à la place de l'oreille et l'oreille à la place de l'œil."

The rôle which Rousseau assigns to music is not the refinement of our sensations, but the creation of "moral feelings."<sup>13</sup> The fact that Rousseau has been accused of having been the father of the whole "movement" in favor of synesthesia, when, as a matter of fact, he was one of its most outspoken opponents, shows that, after all, when writing about Rousseau it may be

<sup>13</sup> See Rousseau's *Essai sur l'origine des Langues*, Chapters XV and XVI.

advisable to read his works with impartiality. This truism seems to have been forgotten by a number of his modern critics, who seem to take a singular pleasure in setting up a kind of a scare-crow Rousseau and in hanging over its frame any rag of discarded or dangerous doctrine that happens to arouse their ire.

The relation between sound and color was, then, a kind of common-place which the Symbolists inherited from the Romanticists, but which, on the whole, they did not carry any further than their models had done. The Romanticists derived their formulation of the theory largely from 18th century scientists. The most striking feature of the rather numerous theories on synesthesia is that nearly everyone of the authors who referred to it associated a different color or tint with each different sound or vowel. And it is exactly because these individual impressions remain so vague, so unstable and ultra-personal, that they are poetically of but little value and cannot be used as the basis for an Esthetics of the Word. But synesthesia is no symptom of a nervous disease; it furnishes no indication of a lack of mental equipoise; it has nothing to do with the notion of decadence in life and art. It seems necessary to stress this point, since it is one of the major arguments used to stigmatize modern poetry as decadent. Even A. Barre, whose attitude is so far more sympathetic than that of a Brunetière, exclaims: "Seuls en nos temps d'intensifs névropathes ont la faculté de percevoir des sons colorés." He classifies definitely all synesthesia among the "observations pathologiques" (*Le Symbolisme*, p. 307). A decadent literature is by definition moribund and some critics seem to have resolved that it shall expire "according to the rules," and with due aid and diagnosis of the medical faculty. Max Nordau has politely compared the modern poet, who is incarnated in des Esseintes, with the cirripedia, a sacculus "which lives in the condition of a parasite in the intestinal canal of certain crustacea."<sup>14</sup> He explains modern literature from 1860 on mainly through the psychology of the idiot and the imbecile.<sup>15</sup> It is, of course, obvious that these gallant pronunciamento shed a blinding light upon the poetry of Henri de

<sup>14</sup> *Degeneration*, p. 309, note.

<sup>15</sup> *Degeneration*, pp. 282-284.

Régnier or Francis Jammes!<sup>16</sup> Prof. Babbitt's chapter on color-audition<sup>17</sup> is very partial. Statements that "color-audition has found literary expression only in those who belong to what we may term the *neurotic school*," betray at once that his point of view on modern poetry is not fundamentally different from that of Max Nordau: He also believes in the myth of degeneration.

It is remarkable, however, that the real scientists do not share the alarmed attitude of these critics about synesthesia. I hasten to quote some authorities: Dr. Henry Lee Smith in his study on *Synesthesia* (*Johns Hopkins Hospital Bulletin*, Vol. XVI, No. 172, July, 1905) discusses the problem from the medical point of view:

"Color hearing or sound seeing, as it is sometimes called, is among the rarer types of associated sensations. It is the constant and involuntary visualization of color associated with some definite sound. Goethe and Hoffmann were among the early observers who referred to the existence in certain people of this peculiar faculty. Sachs in 1812 published an account of the phenomenon as possessed by himself and his sister (*Sachs, Inaugural Dissertation*, Erlangen, 1812). Nussbaumer first excited general interest in the subject by a description of his own case before one of the scientific societies in Vienna. An eminent neurologist, who was present, considered his sensations as pathological and predicted some oncoming mental disturbance. Nussbaumer, however, remained well.<sup>18</sup> In 1881, Bleuler and Lehman, the former of whom had the idiosyncracy, reported the result of their inquiries among 596 normal individuals. They found that 12.8 per cent of these were more or less synesthetic. Among other observers may be mentioned Galton and Fechner, and, in America, Baldwin and Miss Calkins. Flounoy's book *Des Phénomènes de Synopsie*, 1893, contains a most exhaustive study of the subject."

Dr. Smith concludes in his study that the cases he observed were apparently hereditary, but that they did in no way indicate disease. I may add that the same conclusion was reached independently by Dr. Suarez de Mendoza in his interesting

<sup>16</sup> Although Max Nordau's pseudo-science has but little weight, his exaggerations are indicative of a state of opinion which is still quite prevalent.

<sup>17</sup> In *The New Lagoon*, 1910.

<sup>18</sup> Nussbaumer, *Über subjectiv. Farben-Empfindungen*, etc., *Wien. Med. Woch.*, 1873.

volume *L'Audition colorée, étude sur les fausses sensations secondaires physiologiques et particulièrement sur les pseudo-sensations de couleurs associées aux perceptions objectives des sons* (Paris, 1890). He reports long lists of experiments, especially about the color of the vowels. Some of the impressions registered agree with the colors which Rimbaud attributes to the several vowels in his sonnet. The conclusion is again that synesthesia is a rather rare phenomenon, but not a symptom of mental aberration or physical disease. In 1892, Dr. Jules Millet presented to the University of Montpellier a thesis on the subject confirming again the results of his predecessors. These exhaustive studies by competent medical investigators establish, then, beyond any reasonable doubt that the association of sound and color is merely a rare psychological experience and that from its occurrence nothing more tragical can be concluded than: "Let those rejoice who were happily born."

Another and a different solution of the riddle of Rimbaud's sonnet has been proposed. In the *Mercure de France* (1904) Ernest Gaubert pointed to the existence of a certain A. B. C. book of the past century, in which the several vowels are printed in sharp colors: A, in black; E, in yellow; I, in red; U, in green; O, in blue. He argues that it is quite possible that Rimbaud learned his letters from such a spelling-book, and that, when he wrote his sonnet, he simply remembered the colors of the vowels as he once saw them printed. Although the correspondence between the colors of the printed vowels and those in Rimbaud's sonnet is remarkable, there is no proof that Rimbaud ever saw this particular A. B. C. book. The similitude of coloration may only be an accident. Another difficulty with this explanation is that it is not scientific. Ten years earlier, in 1894, Dr. Calman had shown, in the *Lancet* (*Color-hearing, 1894 and 1898*), that the spelling-books used to teach letters to children bear no direct relation to the phenomenon of color-audition. He brings out the fact that in the same family several members were synesthetic and attributed different colors to the several vowels, although they had learned their letters from the same illustrated spelling book.

In any case, Rimbaud did not need the suggestion from an

A. B. C. book to write his sonnet. If he was not himself gifted with synesthesia, he may have read one of the medical studies on the subject; or he may have found the initial idea in the works of Newton, Goethe, Voltaire, Baudelaire or of several Romanticists. The phenomenon of color-audition,—normal, if rare,—was so generally known by 1870 that, if Rimbaud needed a stimulus from the external world for the genesis of his poem, it could have come to him from many sides and in varied ways. The famous sonnet is merely the notation of a rather fleeting state of feeling in Rimbaud, not a new esthetic gospel. It must not be forever condemned to the rôle of a pathetic example of our general degeneration, of the profound perversion that punishes an unbridled indulgence in the confusion of the several arts. Its real significance lies in its undeniable esthetic quality and in its value as a psychological document on Rimbaud's artistic evolution. It will remain as a very personal interpretation of a rather traditional theme. It reveals the deep reverberations of poetry in the boy-poet, Rimbaud, but it does not in the least prove that a mysterious nervous ailment had attacked him. Above all, it constitutes no evidence that a progressive spiritual weakness preyed insidiously upon modern poetry and modern life in general.

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## MATELDA: A STUDY IN MULTIPLE ALLEGORY

ALTHOUGH the chief pleasure of interpreting the *Divine Comedy* will always lie in the quite different task of setting forth one's personal philosophy, there is something to be said for a less "creative" attempt to understand Dante's poem as he wanted it to be understood. This work is to be explained, if at all, not through modern scholarship and modern criticism, but through medieval scholarship and medieval criticism. The present writer's knowledge is far too slight to permit him to regard the entire *Comedy*, or even one canticle of it, from the medieval viewpoint. He will, however, try to give a cross-section of Dante's allegorical scheme as represented in a single character: Matelda, the presiding genius of the Earthly Paradise.<sup>1</sup>

The earlier commentators identified Matelda with the historical Matilda, Grancontessa of Tuscany (1046-1115). Some later critics, who do not share Dante's perverse interest in Italian history, have rejected this idea. Professor Grandgent observes that "the Countess, an august, almost masculine personage, whose mature years rather than her youth were stamped on tradition, has nothing but her name in common with our lady."<sup>2</sup> He asks, in short, how the young, beautiful, idyllic creature of *Purgatory XXVIII* can represent the old, rich, practical noble-woman.

To this one might rejoin that since the Earthly Paradise represents the youth of the world, it may also represent the youth of Matilda. A more serious answer, however, is that in medieval allegory the symbol and the thing symbolized need resemble each other only in the respects in which they are, at a

<sup>1</sup> Even this limited attempt was made possible only by the kindness of Professor Jefferson B. Fletcher, who provided the author with materials and suggestions, and to whose conception of the *Comedy* this study is a mere pendant. Translations used in this study are: Temple Classics, *Divine Comedy*; Rossetti, *Vita Nuova*; Henry, *De Monarchia*; Latham, *Letter to Can Grande*. Translations of passages in *Convito* and theological authors are taken chiefly from Professor Fletcher's unpublished notes, and from Gardner's *Dante and the Mystics*.

<sup>2</sup> *The Ladies of Dante's Lyrics*; Cambridge, 1917; p. 60.

given time and place, to be compared. Even nowadays, when we say to a lagging child, "You're a perfect snail!" we do not mean to imply that the child has horns, and lives in a convoluted shell. And in the Middle Ages, the tendency to base comparisons upon a single point of contact was much stronger than at present, a fact which explains why medieval imagery so often strikes us as incongruous. Christ has a strange, sweet attraction for men; the panther draws other animals to him by his sweet breath. Despite the thousands of respects in which the panther is *not* like Christ, this single respect in which he *is* like Christ was sufficient foundation for the familiar allegory of bestiary literature.

Dante's allegory is thoroughly medieval. It is an allegory of functions, not of entire biographies. To express a given quality, he uses any person or creature possessing that quality, although otherwise the analogy may be far from perfect. Moreover, the same character may typify opposed qualities. Caesar represents both that great imperial office for assaulting which Brutus and Cassius writhe in the mouths of Satan, and predatory greed. We need not, therefore, insist upon Matilda's being a pretty girl if any one good reason can be found for identifying her with the Grancontessa.

Fraticelli, Scartazzini and others object on political grounds to this political identification. For them, the fact that the historical Matilda supported Pope Gregory against Henry IV is enough to throw her out of court. But Dante was no hard-and-fast Ghibelline. He sided with the imperial party in order to restore that balance between the things of Caesar and the things of God without which the peace for which he longed could not be attained. His loyalty to the *spiritual* leadership of the papacy cannot be questioned.<sup>3</sup> The temporal pretensions of Boniface VIII are to be resisted, but Anagni's impiety toward the pontiff must be rebuked.<sup>4</sup> The treatise *De Monarchia* reaches the conclusion that imperial authority is derived directly from God, and not from the Pope. "But," says Dante, "the truth of this final question must not be restricted to mean that

<sup>3</sup> Observe the following references to "the keys": *Inf.* XIX, 90-101; *Inf.* XXVII, 103; *Par.* XXIII, 136; *Par.* XXIV, 34; *Par.* XXVII, 46; *Par.* XXXII, 124.

<sup>4</sup> *Purg.* XX, 85-96.

the Roman Prince shall not be subject in some degree to the Roman Pontiff, for felicity that is mortal is ordered in a measure after felicity that is immortal. Wherefore let Caesar honor Peter as a first-born son should honor his father, so that, resplendent with the light of paternal grace, he may illumine with greater radiance the earthly sphere over which he has been set by Him who alone is Ruler of all things spiritual and temporal."<sup>5</sup>

Now Henry IV certainly did not "honor Peter as a first-born son should honor his father." Against just protest, he insisted on appointing Church officials, and was insolent toward Gregory. Matilda's resistance of Henry would therefore be heartily approved by Dante. Her opposition to Henry was based on the very principle that underlay Dante's opposition to Boniface.

Nor can it be said that Matilda, in her bounty toward the Holy See, repeated the Error of Constantine. Constantine's gifts put *temporal* power in the hands of the Pope; Matilda's bequests were intended to strengthen the *religious* prerogatives of the Pope. Unfortunately, Gregory was forced to combat worldly presumption with worldly weapons, but in such matters Dante was a pragmatist. Matilda's gifts, he would have felt, were worthily given and worthily received.

The arguments against the Grancontessa are of much less force than the arguments in her favor. The Earthly Paradise is simply the *selva selvaggia* of *Inferno* I, transformed. Dante is readmitted to the wood, and finds it a garden, lifted up from sin to the mountain-peak of purity and righteousness. The underbrush of evil has been pruned away, and fruitful trees make a green shade where birds sing. The prophecy of Virgil has come true: "The world is renewed; justice returns, and the first age of man."<sup>6</sup> In the *Paradiso*, the wood is to undergo still another transformation: it will become the Garden of the Divine Rose.<sup>7</sup>

In the political allegory of the poem, the *selva selvaggia* of *Inferno* I is the degenerate Florence of Dante's own day. That

<sup>5</sup> III, xvi, 9.

<sup>6</sup> *Purg.* XXII, 70-73.

<sup>7</sup> *Par.* XXIII et seq.

Florence is also set before us in the city of fallen angels who deny admittance to the poet of imperial Rome and his disciple.<sup>8</sup> In the *Paradiso*, Florence becomes merged in the great City of God. The Florence at the summit of Mount Purgatory represents an intermediate stage: Florence as it once was, Florence as it must be again.

This Florence of the purified Active Life, as we might call it, is the city ruled over by the Grancontessa Matilda. It is described by Cacciaguida<sup>9</sup> in terms that strongly suggest the tradition of the Golden Age. Simplicity and natural virtue characterized the home of Dante's ancestors. "Florence . . . abode in peace, sober and chaste."<sup>10</sup> The absence of corrupting luxury is especially stressed: "There was no chain or coronet, nor dames decked out. . . . Wedding day and dowry evaded not the measure on this side and on that. . . . Bellincion Berti have I seen go girt with bone and leather, and his dame come from her mirror with unpainted face."<sup>11</sup> In short,

"A blisful lyf, a paisible and swete,  
Ledden the peples in the former age;  
· · · · ·  
They ne were nat forpampred with outrage."<sup>12</sup>

These lines of Chaucer's come to mind because Cacciaguida's account of Florence under Matilda agrees so exactly with the familiar Arcadianism of Ovid, Boethius and their imitators. Matelda, in welcoming Dante, Virgil and Statius to her garden, draws the obvious parallel between the Earthly Paradise and the Golden Age.<sup>13</sup> Matelda's garden is the Golden Age; the Grancontessa Matilda ruled in the Golden Age of Florence, when the Tree of Justice sent forth leaves.

The Earthly Paradise, as a part of "circular nature,"<sup>14</sup> moves in cycles. Man does not come back from somewhere else to the lost Eden; Eden itself comes back to him at certain

<sup>8</sup> *Inf.* VIII, IX, X.

<sup>9</sup> *Par.* XV-XVII.

<sup>10</sup> *Par.* XV, 97-99.

<sup>11</sup> *Ib.*, 100 ff.

<sup>12</sup> Chaucer's *The Former Age*, derived from Boethius and the *Romance of the Rose*.

<sup>13</sup> *Purg.* XXVIII, 136-144.

<sup>14</sup> *Par.* VIII, 127.

stages of human history. On the religious plane, one such stage is the human birth of Christ; the next is his second coming. Both events are "figured" by the advent of Beatrice, symbol of Christ's love. In preparation for the second coming, the world must be purified through a return of its own springtime. In the political allegory also the Earthly Paradise is both reminiscent and prophetic: reminiscent of the old, happy days of Dante's ancestors, prophetic of what Florence is to become. "And as the rolling of the lunar heaven covereth and layeth bare the shores incessantly, so fortune doth to Florence."<sup>15</sup>

Sinful Florence, like the sinful world, awaits a redeemer. The deliverer announced to Dante in Beatrice's "hard riddle"<sup>16</sup> is Can Grande della Scala. The young Lord of Verona was descended from a line under whom Verona had enjoyed such peace and well-being as existed in Florence in the days of Matilda. As Vicar Imperial to Henry VII, he had brought the *pax Romana* to town after town of Lombardy. Next he should humble Florence, sower of the seed of disaffection,<sup>17</sup> as Joshua humbled Jericho. In being the saviour of Florence, he will be the saviour of Dante prophesied by Cacciaguida.<sup>18</sup> This scion of the Scaligeri is the "ladder"<sup>19</sup> by means of which Dante will climb back to his city. He is the *deus ex machina* of Dante's personal "comedy." It is in preparation for his coming, and in prophetic anticipation of what his influence will be, that Matilda's age is renewed in Florence. In this redeemed *selvaggia*, Dante must for a while be a *silvano* (forester) before he joins Beatrice in "that Rome whereof Christ is a Roman."<sup>20</sup>

Several other interesting facts remain to be noted. Since, as will later be apparent, Matelda resembles John the Baptist in various respects, it is important to remember that Christ's precursor was patron saint of Florence.<sup>21</sup>

Speaking of the Earthly Paradise, Matelda says, "Qui fu innocente l'umana radice."<sup>22</sup> Later, Cacciaguida, spokesman

<sup>15</sup> *Par.* XVI, 82-84.

<sup>16</sup> *Purg.* XXXIII, 34 ff.

<sup>17</sup> *Par.* IX, 127-132.

<sup>18</sup> *Par.* XVII, 70-72.

<sup>19</sup> *Epist.* X, par. 2.

<sup>20</sup> *Purg.* XXXII, 100-103.

<sup>21</sup> *Par.* XVI, 25.

<sup>22</sup> *Purg.* XXVIII, 142.

of Florence's age of innocence, will say to Dante, "Io fui la tua radice."<sup>23</sup> Dante is a limb of the forest where grows the Tree of Imperial Justice.

In the classical tradition, the Golden Age is lost largely through the impious greed of men. For Dante, the greatest sin of all is cupidity, in its broadest sense as meaning any hasty, perverse, misdirected or unideal desire. Cupidity, Cacciaguida shows, ruined the Golden Age of Florence. Can Grande, the appointed deliverer of Florence, is represented as free from this vice: "Sparkles of his virtue shall appear in carelessness of silver and of toils."<sup>24</sup>

It is at least possible to say, then, that the claims of the Grancontessa Matilda cannot be dismissed with a wave of the hand. The Earthly Paradise has a political meaning, and the historical Matilda, ruler of Florence in its Golden Age, fits this meaning perfectly.

There is, of course, another meaning. And it is convenient that, just when we wish to rise to another plane of allegory, the lady's name should melt away before our eyes. Spelled backward, "Matelda" gives *ad Letham*: she is the lady who leads Dante to *Lethe*.<sup>25</sup> We cannot be sure that this is more than a coincidence; but we can be sure that the coincidence would have struck Dante as deeply significant. "Names are the consequences of things."<sup>26</sup>

According to Gardner, the theory that identifies Matelda with some lady of the *Vita Nuova* "has mainly sentimental reasons to recommend it."<sup>27</sup> Since Dante's mysticism is simply the love-philosophy of the *Vita Nuova* purified and intensified, with certain theological increments, such a remark from such a source is difficult to explain. Dante would be perplexed, one feels, by both Professor Grandgent and Professor Gardner. The former, interested in the *Vita Nuova* ladies, will pay no attention to the political aspect of Matelda; the latter, interested in the two Mechtilds, regards consideration of the *Vita Nuova*

<sup>23</sup> *Par.* XV, 89.

<sup>24</sup> *Par.* XVII, 83-84. Cf. *Inf.* I, 103.

<sup>25</sup> In classical Latin, the word is declined as in Greek; but Dante, with his ignorance of Greek, would probably have associated it with the Latin *a*-declension.

<sup>26</sup> *Vita Nuova*, XIII, 20-21.

<sup>27</sup> *Dante and the Mystics*; London, 1912; p. 272.

in this connection as sentimental. Such partiality implies a viewpoint very different from that which Dante himself brought back from the Garden of the Rose, where all life was one.

Of the *Vita Nuova* ladies, by far the likeliest candidate is Giovanna-Primavera. Let us analyze her claims. *Vita Nuova* XXIV relates that Dante, on a certain day, felt the spirit of Love enter his heart, and soon after beheld approaching him

"a certain lady who was very famous for her beauty, and of whom that friend whom I have already called the first among my friends<sup>28</sup> had long been enamoured. This lady's right name was Joan; but because of her comeliness (or at least it was so imagined) she was called of many *Primavera*, and went by that name among them. Then looking again, I perceived that the most noble Beatrice followed after her."

Within the heart of Dante, Love explains this incident:

"She that came first was called Spring, only because of that which was to happen on this day. And it was I myself who caused that name to be given her; seeing that as the Spring cometh first in the year, so should she come first on this day, when Beatrice was to show herself after the vision of her servant. And even if thou go about to consider her right name, it is also as one should say, 'She shall come first';<sup>29</sup> inasmuch as her name, Joan, is taken from that John who went before the True Light, saying: '*Ego vox clamantis in deserto: Parate viam Domini.*' . . . He who should inquire delicately touching this matter, could not but call Beatrice by mine own name, which is to say, Love; beholding her so like unto me."

The sonnet written on this occasion takes a much simpler view of the matter. It concludes:

"I chanced to look the way he [Love] had drawn near,  
And saw the Ladies Joan and Beatrice  
Approach me, this the other following;  
One and a second marvel instantly.  
And even as now my memory speaketh this,  
Love spake it then: 'The first is christen'd Spring;  
The second, Love, she is so like to me.'"

Here, instead of the elaborate allegory, is a pleasantly conventional juxtaposition of two fair girls as Spring and Love.

<sup>28</sup> Guido Cavalcanti.

<sup>29</sup> ciò è prima verrà.

Rossetti's note on this passage explains that Dante is "suppressing from delicacy toward his friend, the words in which love describes Joan as merely the forerunner of Beatrice." But this is getting the cart before the horse: the poem is the primary document, and it displays Monna Vanna and Monna Bice as two "marvels" of approximately equal, and seemingly complementary, loveliness. In the prose text, this rather indiscriminate but quite natural gallantry must be explained to accord with the deeper, more mature Beatrice-philosophy.

The most sensible and human interpretation of the *Vita Nuova* is that after Beatrice's death a great spiritual love arose in Dante, and that in the light of this mystical passion he reinterpreted the poetry of "gay science" written in days when Beatrice was only one of several "ladies who have intelligence of love." The book is a "new life" in being a new version of the old life. Is it possible, for example, to take the "screen lady" quite seriously? Is not this story concocted to explain and absorb into the Beatrice legend an earlier, or more probably a parallel, poetic love-affair? It is difficult to take at its face value Dante's elaborate account of why he *seemed* for a time to be interested in someone else. How much easier to suppose that he *was*, *dolce stilistically speaking*, interested in someone else!

To imagine that Giovanna is the "screen lady" is not inherently absurd. It is quite natural that Dante should have felt a sentimental interest in his friend's beautiful mistress, and quite natural that as the pure star of Beatrice arose he should wish to display his connection with the two women, and their relation to each other, in a way that would exalt Monna Bice without doing injustice to Monna Vanna. His method of achieving this aim is ingenious. As John the Baptist, Vanna is placed in the position of saying: "There cometh after me one that is mightier than I, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose."<sup>20</sup> On the other hand, she can hardly complain of her lofty rôle as the forerunner of very Love.

It is impossible to prove that Vanna is the "screen lady." Nothing is known of her apart from the statement given in

<sup>20</sup> *Mark I*, 7.

*Vita Nuova* XXIV, that she was for a time the lady-love of Guido Cavalcanti. This fact is substantiated in the famous "Boast of Love" sonnet, No. XXXII, addressed to Guido by Dante, which couples three men and three women: Dante and Beatrice, Lapo and Lagia, Guido and Vanna. But whether Vanna is the "screen lady" or not, Dante's allegorical treatment of her in relation to Beatrice proves her to be a person of great importance, and not unworthy of a place in the *Divine Comedy*.

Since Guido Cavalcanti was Dante's precursor in poetry,<sup>31</sup> it is appropriate that Guido's lady-love—his earthly muse, as it were—should be made the precursor of Beatrice. Lorenzo de' Medici, in his confession of love imitated from the *Vita Nuova*, declares that he was induced to seek a lady-love by the charm and fame of his brother's mistress.<sup>32</sup> May not Dante have been similarly inspired to exalt Beatrice in his poetry by the relations between Guido and Vanna? In that case, Vanna would be the precursor of Beatrice in an especially significant sense.

The hypothesis that Matelda is Giovanna-Primavera is based upon four closely related arguments:

1. Matelda is exactly the sort of person who in real life would be nicknamed "Primavera." She suggests budding youth, beauty, innocence, high spirits. She goes along singing and picking flowers.<sup>33</sup> From her appearance, Dante infers that she warms herself at love's beams.<sup>34</sup> When she turns around, it is as if she were dancing.<sup>35</sup> She likes to smile, and does it beautifully.<sup>36</sup> She sings *Beati, quorum tecta sunt peccata* "like a lady in love."<sup>37</sup> She is compared to a nymph of the olden times.<sup>38</sup> She calls Dante "Brother mine," turning full round to him.<sup>39</sup> Yet she is never "otherwise than a virgin that droppeth her modest eyes."<sup>40</sup> Might she not have been the lady-love of Guido Cavalcanti?

<sup>31</sup> *Purg.* XI, 97-99.

<sup>32</sup> *Sonetti e Canzoni, Comento*, section 6.

<sup>33</sup> *Purg.* XXVIII, 40-42.

<sup>34</sup> *Ib.*, 43-44.

<sup>35</sup> *Ib.*, 52-54.

<sup>36</sup> *Ib.*, 67 and 76.

<sup>37</sup> *Purg.* XXIX, 1-3.

<sup>38</sup> *Ib.*, 4-6.

<sup>39</sup> *Ib.*, 15.

<sup>40</sup> *Purg.* XXVIII, 56-57.

2. More specifically, the Earthly Paradise is a vernal spot, and Matelda herself is the very spirit of spring. "What strikes one most in this passage," says Grandgent, referring to Canto XXVIII and the opening of XXIX, "is the vernal atmosphere, the merging of the lady into the springtime, or rather, perhaps, the embodiment of springtime in the lady."<sup>41</sup> Eden is mankind's spring, and Matelda is its presiding genius. The poet says to her:

"Tu mi fai rimembrar, dove e qual era  
Proserpina nel tempo che perdette  
la madre lei, ed ella primavera."<sup>42</sup>

Here Dante conveniently supplies us with the lady's name. Later, she uses it herself, when, referring to the Earthly Paradise, she says, "qui primavera è sempre."<sup>43</sup> Moreover, the Proserpina story represents the tragic intermittence of Spring, so that in likening Matelda to Proserpina, Dante is likening her to Spring. Moore feels that *primavera*, literally taken, here means the flowers of Spring that Proserpina had been gathering; and according to Scartazzini, a kind of daisy is in Tuscany called *primavera*.<sup>44</sup> This reading would only increase the delicacy and tenderness of the allusion to Vanna.

This important passage may also be interpreted in a way that detracts from the force of Grandgent's statement: "Dante apparently knew Giovanna so well that he should have recognized her, even in the Earthly Paradise; whereas, in his account of his meeting with the 'beauteous lady,' there is no trace of recognition."<sup>45</sup> But if Vanna is Spring, and Proserpina is Spring, Dante is saying to the vernal Matelda, "You remind me of Vanna."

Another question raised by Grandgent is that Matelda must be a departed spirit, and that we do not know that Vanna was dead in 1300, the dramatic date of the *Comedy*. The most Grandgent can offer for his final candidate, the young lady of *Vita Nuova* VIII, is that she is certified dead.<sup>46</sup> But may not

<sup>41</sup> *Ladies of Dante's Lyrics*, pp. 52-53.

<sup>42</sup> XXVIII, 49-51.

<sup>43</sup> *Ib.*, 143.

<sup>44</sup> Vernon, *Readings on the Purgatorio of Dante*; London, 1889; Vol. II, p. 290.

<sup>45</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 60.

<sup>46</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 62.

the above-quoted lines from *Purgatory* XXVIII indicate that Vanna also is dead? Dante says not merely, "You remind me of Vanna," but "You remind me of what Vanna was before she died."

3. As a lovely woman, Matelda comes before the still more lovely woman, Beatrice. The external situation reminds us of *Vita Nuova* XXIV.

4. Allegorized, Matelda is the forerunner of Beatrice, as John the Baptist is the forerunner of Christ, who is Divine Love. The relations between the two women were already allegorized in the *Vita Nuova*, and they are simply carried over into the *Comedy*. Matelda is *primavera*—Spring; and *prima verrà*—she shall come first. Perhaps she is also *prima vera*—the first true one. She meets Dante, and guides him through Eden to the Divine Pageant in which Beatrice appears. She prepares Dante for the authentic revelation of the Divine spirit in Beatrice. Most important of all, she literally *baptizes* Dante:

"She had drawn me into the river up to my neck, and, pulling me after her, went along over the water light as a shuttle. When I was nigh unto the blessed bank, '*Asperges me*' so sweetly I heard that I cannot remember it much less describe it. The fair lady opened her arms, clasped my head, and dipped me where I must needs swallow of the water."<sup>47</sup>

More explicit proof could not be demanded. Matelda, like Vanna, plays John the Baptist in relation to Beatrice.

The claims of Giovanna-Primavera, then, are equal to those of the Grancontessa. They are no better and no worse—simply on a different allegorical plane. Though distinct, the two planes are harmoniously related. Monna Vanna is likened to John the Baptist, and John the Baptist is patron saint of Countess Matilda's city. Again, the Golden Age—the springtime—of Florence was the reign of Matilda; hence the historical personage is related to the vernal theme. The Countess also agrees with the theological conception. In the revival of her Florence, Dante will devote himself to the Active Life, in preparation for the Contemplative. Other correspondences will be noted later.

These two identifications are by no means mutually exclusive. Very probably Dante had both persons in mind when he

<sup>47</sup> *Purg.* XXXI, 94-102.

created the character. He uses the name Matelda to give a clue to the political allegory, which otherwise, in this part of the poem, would be somewhat obscure. The name occurs only once,<sup>48</sup> and, as we have seen, there are plenty of hints pointing to Vanna.

But why should not one or both of the Mechtilds be included? For a discussion of their claims, the reader must turn to Professor Gardner.<sup>49</sup> It has not been shown that the sometimes remarkable similarities between their work and Dante's may not be due to a common dependence upon standard mystical authors. Matelda sings *Beati, quorum tecta sunt peccata* "like a lady in love."<sup>50</sup> This suggests the very strong eroticism of Mechtildis of Hackeborn, but the point is a slight one, and no dependence should be placed upon it. We do not really need the nuns, as Vanna herself will "carry" the mystical allegory. But if it is ever proved that Dante knew about the Mechtilds, we can cheerfully add them to the allegory. The correspondence in the names would surely appeal to Dante as significant.

This method of interpreting the allegory by planes is completely justified by the *Letter to Can Grande*.<sup>51</sup> "The aim of the whole and of the part," Dante informs his patron, "is to remove those living in this life from a state of misery and to guide them to a state of happiness."<sup>52</sup> But this aim, the poet has previously said, "may be manifold; that is to say, near and remote." The "near" aim is the restoration of a peaceful and well-governed Florence like that of Matilda. The "remote" aim is the salvation of the human soul through contact with the divine spirit, in preparation for which mystical experience the ministrations of Matelda in her Baptist rôle are needed.

As we begin thus to divide Dante's aim, we realize that each of the two divisions exists for the sake of the other. At present, politics and religion are so widely sundered that many critics are tempted to regard the *Comedy* as a theological love-poem

<sup>48</sup> *Purg.* XXXIII, 119.

<sup>49</sup> *Dante and the Mystics*, Chap. VIII.

<sup>50</sup> *Purg.* XXIX, 1-3.

<sup>51</sup> Assuming, with Moore, Toynbee, Gardner and most other authorities, that this work is authentic.

<sup>52</sup> *Ep.* X, par. 15.

rather disturbingly peppered with historical allusions. But may we not listen to Dante?

"Now the *kind of philosophy* under which we proceed in the whole and in the part is moral philosophy or ethics; because the whole was undertaken not for speculation but for practice. For although in some place or passage it may be handled in the manner of speculative philosophy, this is not for the sake of speculative philosophy, but for the sake of practical needs."<sup>53</sup>

"The aim of Dante's mysticism," says Gardner, "is to make spiritual experience a force for the reformation of mankind."<sup>54</sup> For Dante, the reformation of mankind depended on the reformation of Italian politics. Of several passages which might be used to support this point, we may select that in which Cacciaguida first addresses Dante, with a tenderness like that of Anchises "when in Elysium he perceived his son." At his words, Dante says, "I turned back my sight unto my Lady, and on this side and on that I was bemazed; for in her eyes was blazing such a smile, I thought with mine I had touched the bottom both of my grace and of my Paradise."<sup>55</sup> The moment when Dante meets his ancestor is thus associated with the very pinnacle of mystic experience.

Later, after the vision of the happy warriors in Canto XVIII, Dante turned again to Beatrice, and "saw her eyes so clear, so joyous, that her semblance surpassed all former usage and the last."<sup>56</sup> These inspiring examples of patriotic valor, then, find direct correspondence in the blazing eyes of Love. "Make thy entire vision manifest," is Cacciaguida's command to the poet.<sup>57</sup> He has tried to do so, but we seem interested only in the fragments. It is hard for us to realize that the Jacob's ladder of contemplation rising from the seventh splendor<sup>58</sup> may also be the ladder on the scutcheon of Can Grande, by means of which Dante will climb back to a place of honor and influence in Florence. Our world has fallen apart; but to Dante, the

<sup>53</sup> *Ib.*, par. 16.

<sup>54</sup> *Dante and the Mystics*, p. 323.

<sup>55</sup> *Par.* XV, 25-33.

<sup>56</sup> *Par.* XVIII, 55-57.

<sup>57</sup> *Par.* XVII, 128.

<sup>58</sup> *Par.* XXI, 28 ff. For the mystical explanation, see Gardner, *op. cit.*, pp. 304-

"near" and "remote" aims represented by Matelda are two aspects of one thing.

"The meaning of this work," the poet informs Can Grande, "is not simple, but rather can be said to be of many significations."<sup>59</sup> There follows the familiar list of methods of expounding a text: literal, allegorical, moral and anagogical.<sup>60</sup> These may be applied to Matelda.

1. *Literal*.—An account of the actions of the poem just as they stand would constitute the literal interpretation.

2. *Allegorical*.—In general, this term applies to all the non-literal senses. Specifically, it seems to apply to the truths which lie nearest the surface of the fiction. The foreground allegory is political, and in it Matelda is the Grancontessa.

3. *Moral*.—Since the ethical plane concerns human conduct, Dante thinks of the moral allegory in terms of his own experience of life. Here, then, Matelda is Monna Vanna, representing the influences that prepared Dante for deeper, more spiritual love. This personal element, however, is generalized, and Matelda represents that Active Life which is a preparation for the Contemplative Life.

4. *Anagogical*.—Here Dante uses his earlier allegorization of Vanna in the *Vita Nuova*, making her a Baptist-like precursor of divine love and of contemplation. *Primavera* becomes *prima verrà*. On this plane, either or both of the Mechtilds may also be introduced by their supporters.

Although this classification of the allegory may be a helpful expository device, it is too stiff and artificial to give any real idea of the close-woven texture of Dante's symbolism. Dante himself says that, "although these mystical meanings are called by various names, they can in general all be said to be allegorical." He means, I believe, not that the allegory is simpler than his four-fold classification, but that the three figurative senses are three closely connected aspects of the same thing.

On each plane, Matelda is the *precursor*. The Grancontessa's Florence looks forward to Florence as it will be when Can Grande has slain the *lupa* of papal cupidity. Monna Vanna foreshadows Beatrice. The Active Life leads to the

<sup>59</sup> *Ep.* X, par. 7.

<sup>60</sup> Cf. *Convito*, II, 1.

Contemplative Life. The purification of baptism is prerequisite to the union with divine love as symbolized by the sacrament of the Eucharist. We may say, then, that Matelda is less a person than a function, and that a medieval mind would take her to represent any historical personage, Biblical figure or theological abstraction that illustrates this function. Besides trying to "identify" her as if she were no more than a character in a *roman à clef*, we should *interpret* her by drawing forth all her symbolic implications. The satisfying results achieved by this method of interpretation form the best possible evidence that Dante planned his work with such an analysis in view.

Matelda's precursorial function appears most clearly in her connection with John the Baptist. Now that Dante has reached the summit of the Mount, with all his sins remitted by penitence, he is almost ready for that "first union" with Beatrice which is also the first union with God in faith.<sup>61</sup> The sacramental sign of this first union with God in faith is baptism, "gateway of all the sacraments."<sup>62</sup> Their perfect consummation is the eucharist.<sup>63</sup> "Through baptism," says St. Thomas, "is given the first act of spiritual life, but through the eucharist is given its complement."<sup>64</sup> Dante's immersion in Lethe signifies baptism; his immersion in Eunoe, the eucharist.

Both these rites, however, are described in *Purgatory* as baptisms.<sup>65</sup> Now though ordinarily baptism is a sacrament not to be repeated, there was, during Christ's life on earth, a necessary repetition of the rite. Before Christ himself assumed ministry, John baptized. And by the church of after years, John's baptism was retroactively justified as a necessary intermediate between the sacrament of the Old Law, circumcision, and the definitive baptism of the New Law by Christ or his ministers. The baptism of John is a preparation for the baptism of Christ, just as Lethe is a preparation for Eunoe. One is the *precursor* of the other.

<sup>61</sup> Cf. St. Thomas, IV *Sent.* xxxix, 6 ad 2: ". . . prima conjunctio animae ad Deum est per fidem: et ideo per eam anima quasi despontatur Deo, ut patet Oeae ii, 20: Sponsabo te mihi in fide."

<sup>62</sup> St. Thomas, S.T. III, lxiii, 6.

<sup>63</sup> Ib., III, lxxv, 1; lxiii, 6.

<sup>64</sup> IV *Sent.* ix, 5, 4, ad 2.

<sup>65</sup> *Purg.* XXXI, 102; XXXIII, 138.

There is a distinction between the two immersions received by Dante. In the case of Lethe, the rite is performed by Matelda on her own initiative.<sup>66</sup> In the case of Eunoe, however, Matelda acts at the bidding of Beatrice.<sup>67</sup> The first rite is purely the baptism of John; the second is the act of Beatrice through an agent, and may therefore be interpreted as the baptism of Christ.

St. Thomas, quoting St. Jerome, says: "By the baptism of Christ grace is given, by which sins are remitted gratis; and that which is consummated by the bridegroom is begun by the bridesman—*i.e.*, John."<sup>68</sup> Granting the natural reversal of sex, this remark applies exactly to the relations between Beatrice and Matelda. Beatrice is explicitly associated with the "Bride."<sup>69</sup> Matelda, since she brings Dante to Beatrice to be reunited in faith restored, may quite fittingly be conceived as the bridesmaid of that spousal, a Monna Vanna glorified as John the Baptist.

The bridal metaphor, of course, is essential to the language of mysticism. Matelda plays a part in preparing Dante for the supreme moment of insight that concludes the *Comedy*, and of which this "first union" with Beatrice is an adumbration. Let us recall the three traditional stages of the mystic's progress: *purificatio*, *illuminatio* and *contemplatio*. Matelda has guided Dante to Lethe. When she plunges him in the stream, thus freeing him from remembrance of his sins, she completes the process of *purification*. Dante is now ready to meet the eyes and the smile of Beatrice; that is, to receive *illumination* from the "glory of living light eternal."<sup>70</sup> But the gaze of Dante is so rapt that *illumination* almost passes over into *contemplation*.<sup>71</sup> For this final stage he is not yet ready. "Too fixedly," murmur

<sup>66</sup> *Purg.* XXXI, 91–102.

<sup>67</sup> *Purg.* XXXIII, 127–135.

<sup>68</sup> *S.T.* III, xxxviii, 3, ad 1.

<sup>69</sup> *Purg.* XXX, 11.

<sup>70</sup> *Purg.* XXXI, 139.

<sup>71</sup> St. Thomas, *III Sent.* xxxv, 1, 2, 3, c.: "Contemplatio nominat actum videndi Deum in se, sed speculatio nominat actum videndi Deum in creaturis, quasi in speculo." Strictly speaking, therefore, the experience of beholding Beatrice is merely a high form of "speculation." But since she is a symbol of divine love, that experience is *poetically* equivalent to "contemplation," and is so regarded by Dante.

the attendant angels, and Dante is forced to turn his blinded eyes away.<sup>72</sup>

"What possible connection can there be," the reader may ask, "between the Grancontessa of Tuscany and the bridesmaid of this mystic union?" A connection can be shown. In the *De Doctrina Christiana*, St. Augustine compares that purification which the mind must undergo in order to see God to "a kind of ambulation, or navigation towards our native land."<sup>73</sup> In beholding the face of Beatrice, the purified Dante has neared his "native land" in a double sense. He beholds divine love reflected in the eyes of Beatrice, and, prophetically, he beholds Can Grande. Dante always associates his spiritual well-being with the material well-being of Florence under the *pax Romana*, and with his own peace, fame and influence in the redeemed city.

In being dazzled by the eyes and the smile of Beatrice, Dante receives an intimation of his mission on earth. Not yet can he behold, even in Beatrice's mirror, the ultimate radiance. Before loving God, he must love his neighbor; before praising, he must serve. In the apostolic vocation of Dante, Matelda is still the precursor. She awakens him from the slumber into which he falls, and directs him once more to Beatrice. Like the pilgrims in *Piers Plowman*, Dante has been seeking the shrine of "Saint Truth." Now he is told to find Truth by plowing his half-acre; "Do-best" will come later. "Here," says Beatrice, "shalt thou be with me short time a forester, and with me everlastingly shalt be a citizen of that Rome whereto Christ is a Roman."<sup>74</sup> After being shown a series of visions in order that he may "profit the world that liveth ill,"<sup>75</sup> Dante is ready for the baptism of Eunoe—the eucharist. This will add to the negative innocence given by Lethe that positive joy in right doing, that *intelletto d'amore*, which comes from sharing the passion of Christ. In the next canticle, Dante will be granted the boon of contemplation, but only as a means of increasing his power to lead mankind upward to felicity.

When, at Beatrice's command, Matelda immerses Dante in

<sup>72</sup> *Purg.* XXXII, 1-12.

<sup>73</sup> *De Doct. Christ.*, I, 10.

<sup>74</sup> *Purg.* XXXII, 100-102.

<sup>75</sup> *Ib.*, 103.

Eunoe, she completes her duties as preparer of the Lord's way. It may be said, however, that an influence akin to hers is exerted not merely in the concluding cantos of *Purgatory*, but from the very beginning of the *Divine Comedy*.

For the function of Matelda is essentially the same as that of Lucia, through whom Mary's command to rescue Dante is transmitted to Beatrice. The important passage in question is *Inferno* II, 94-105, where Virgil reports the account given to him by Beatrice. The "gentil donna," the Virgin, called Lucia to her, and said: "Now thy servant has need of thee; and I commend him to thee." Lucia "arose," says Beatrice, "and came to the place where I was sitting with the ancient Rachel." She addressed Beatrice in almost reproachful tones, "Beatrice, true praise of God, why helpest thou not him who loved thee so, that for thee he left the vulgar crowd?" Beatrice in turn gives her commands to Virgil. She remains, however, the contemplative, the true praise of God. Representatives of the Active Life must inspire the human reason of Virgil to guide Dante through Hell and up Mount Purgatory, until the moment is ripe for the appearance of Beatrice. Lucia is the beginning of this manifestation of prevenient grace; Matelda is its culmination.

To associate Matelda with Lucia perhaps only deepens the mystery, for Lucia herself presents a difficult problem. Witte's theory, concurred in by Moore,<sup>76</sup> that she is Dante's patron saint is decidedly interesting, and can easily be absorbed into the present interpretation. Nor need we argue the relative claims of the Syracusan martyr and the Florentine nun. Either, or both, will serve us.

The Saint Lucy who met martyrdom under Diocletian about the year 300 has points of contact with Matelda in that, like John the Baptist, she suffered from the tyranny of unbelievers. Because of the beautiful eyes which she tore out lest they should enflame her lover, and which were restored to her even more beautiful than before, she became the patron saint of persons afflicted with eye-trouble. As Moore points out in the article previously referred to, Dante suffered from weak eyes.<sup>77</sup> He also, we may add, suffered from spiritual eye-trouble, long

<sup>76</sup> See the latter's *Saint Lucia*, in *Studies in Dante*, fourth series; Cambridge, 1917.

<sup>77</sup> Cf. *Vita Nuova* XL and *Convito* III, 9.

unable as he was to behold the Sun except as it was reflected down to him from higher intelligences. Lucia's name, of course, suggests the light-bearing function. Since Matelda, by baptizing Dante in Lethe, prepares him to behold the divine light reflected in the eyes of Beatrice, she too is the healer of Dante's eyes.

The Florentine Sta. Lucia, who died about 1225, fits the foreground allegory of the Earthly Paradise. A member of the prominent Ubaldini family, she was sister to "Il Cardinale."<sup>78</sup> She was a nun in the Florentine convent of *Monticelli*, a name not without significance when we think of Mount Purgatory. It is of course a coincidence that she had a sister, also a local saint, named *Giovanna*. To the modern scientific mind, coincidences are vulgar accidents; to the medieval mind, they are the intersections of different rays of the divine will. The Grancontessa Matilda, representing the political well-being of Florence, and Santa Lucia degli Ubaldini, representing the spiritual aspirations of Florence, might appropriately be united in Matelda. The Florentine nun, also, lends some encouragement to those who wish to identify Matelda with a German nun.

During Dante's progress through hell, the guidance of Virgil is entirely adequate except at the entrance to the City of Dis, where the poets are rescued from real danger by the intervention of a male angel.<sup>79</sup> This angel may well have been sent by Lucia. In a sense, the whole of hell is Florence, but here is the quintessence of that rebellious city. If Lucia is connected with Matelda, it is appropriate that the gates of the city should be thrown open at the command of an emissary of the Grancontessa. The point, however, must seem a slight one until supported by evidence to be brought forward later.

In the second canticle, Virgil's guidance is reinforced by other characters and by prophetic visions. The first of these helpers is Cato, who may serve to remind us that Countess Matilda's Florence is not only a symbol of Golden Age and Earthly Paradise, but a continuation or prophetic revival of the spirit of imperial Rome. The meeting of Cacciaguida and Dante

<sup>78</sup> *Inf.* X, 120. Cf. Moore, *op. cit.*, for other reasons why Dante might have been interested in her.

<sup>79</sup> *Inf.* IX, 73 ff.

is likened to the meeting of Anchises and Aeneas in Elysium. The old Florentine begins to address his descendant in pure Latin,<sup>80</sup> and at the end of his discourse Dante is moved to apply to him the ancient Roman "voi" which originated in the multiple grandeur of Caesar.<sup>81</sup> When Cacciaguida compares the new Florence with the old, he lets ancient Romans represent, by implication, the Florence of Matilda: "Then a Cianghella, or a Lapo Salterello, would have been as great a marvel as now would Cincinnatus or Cornelius."<sup>82</sup> But it will not be necessary to illustrate further the obvious fact that Dante was proudly conscious of his place in the continuity of the Roman tradition.

Nor will it be necessary to expatiate upon Dante's belief that certain Roman poets, and certain characters of Roman history, were forerunners of Christian truth. The descendants of Aeneas resembled the Israelites in being a "chosen people," and the fortunes of the two races had many points of correspondence. Thus Cato's spirit pervades and rules the purgatorial mount,<sup>83</sup> rejecting the unfit,<sup>84</sup> and spurring on the laggard,<sup>85</sup> as in life he had urged the remnant of Pompey's army across the Libyan desert.<sup>86</sup> He cannot, however, enter the Earthly Paradise. Like Virgil, he must give place to Matelda, Dante's new guide. Now the Grancontessa Matilda resembles Cato in that she stands for the old Roman spirit, which loved the Empire, but hated the tyranny of emperors. She defied Henry IV as Cato defied Julius Caesar. Matelda might also have reminded a medieval interpreter of Martia, Cato's wife. As the summit of Mount Purgatory is reached, the spirit of Cato and the spirit of Martia seem to have united. This may be intended to remind us of Martia's return to Cato after the death of Hortensius, whereby is meant, according to the *Convito*, "that the noble soul at the beginning of old age returns to God."<sup>87</sup> Martia's strange marriage to Hortensius, also, corresponds to the ideals

<sup>80</sup> *Par.* XV, 28-30.

<sup>81</sup> *Par.* XVI, 10.

<sup>82</sup> *Par.* XV, 127-129.

<sup>83</sup> *Purg.* I, 65-66.

<sup>84</sup> *Ib.*, 28 ff.

<sup>85</sup> *Purg.* II, 118 ff.

<sup>86</sup> *Inf.* XIV, 113-115.

<sup>87</sup> The whole passage is cited by Grandgent, *Ladies of Dante's Lyrics*, p. 70.

of that Active Life which the commentators have rightly associated with Matelda.

Cato and Matelda are connected in still another way. The numerous points of correspondence between Cato and Elijah have already been set forth by Professor Grandgent.<sup>88</sup> Elijah, in turn, is related to John the Baptist. He was declared by Christ himself to be one with John.<sup>89</sup> If, to paraphrase Euclid, things allegorically related to the same thing are allegorically related to each other, Cato and Matelda in her baptist rôle are linked together by their resemblance to Elijah.

But Lucia, not content to help the poets indirectly through figures like Cato, appears in her own person. On the morning of each of the three days consumed in the ascent of Mount Purgatory, a vision assists in guiding Virgil and Dante on their upward way. In the first, Lucia is specifically mentioned as the lady who showed the dreaming Virgil the entrance to Purgatory.<sup>90</sup> The dream, however, forms an equally appropriate setting for Matelda, whose influence may well extend from the Gate of Purgatory to the Gate of Paradise.

The second vision occupies lines 1-36 of *Purgatory* XIX. Here a Siren fascinates Dante by her singing. But a lady appears and cries reproachfully, "O Virgil, Virgil, who is this?" Then Virgil, "with his eyes ever fixed on that honest one," approaches the Siren. In the next line, however, the words *l'altra prendeva* are ambiguous, for one cannot be sure whether Virgil or the lady exposes the Siren's loathesomeness. The commentators are about equally divided. The words *ed ei venia*<sup>91</sup> seem to support the interpretation that Virgil, while not capable of the deed unaided, is able to perform it when drawing strength from the eyes of the holy lady. In any case, Dante is awakened by the foul stench issuing from the Siren's belly, and the vision is at an end.

For reasons which would demand a disproportionate amount of space to explain, the Siren is probably Circe, representing the lusts of the flesh. The lady has been variously interpreted as

<sup>88</sup> *P.M.L.A.*, Vol. XVII, 71 et seq.

<sup>89</sup> *Mat.* XI, 14.

<sup>90</sup> *Purg.* IX, 55 ff.

<sup>91</sup> *Purg.* XIX, 29.

meaning Wisdom, Truth, Holy Church, Reason, Temperance and Philosophy. It seems probable that she is Lucia in the act of supporting her agent, Virgil. Virgil symbolizes more than mere "reason," the allegorical tag usually assigned him. It was not reason which enabled him to prophesy Christ and the Holy Roman Empire, but Prevenient Grace, the light shed upon those who, as it were, know God unconsciously, like the "dear child" in Wordsworth's sonnet. This is the light provided by Lucia. The vision, then, represents the *total* influence of Virgil: human reason aided by grace. Prophetically, it signifies that when the wanderers reach the summit of the mount, Virgil will give place to a pure embodiment of the theological abstraction which he has represented only in a human, imperfect way.

Virgil does, in fact, give place to Matelda; and our belief that she is connected with Lucia receives support from the vision now under consideration. We have no real facts, of course, as to the influence of Monna Vanna upon Dante. But if in the *Vita Nuova* she is one of the "ladies who have intelligence of love," may she not in the *Comedy* have intelligence of *divine* love, and thus stand in opposition to the wrongful desires represented by Circe? The artificial but beautiful conventions of courtly love did not make saints of Dante and his circle, but they did much to restrain them from those Circe-like lusts which transform men into beasts. In default of Beatrice herself, these gentle influences might well be represented by Primavera.

In Dante's life, two strong moral influences were the beauty of great literature and the beauty of good women. It would therefore be quite natural for Virgil and Vanna to join forces in exposing the vileness of Circe. Dante would remember that Virgil represented Aeneas as keeping well off from Circe's isle, "lest the pious race of Troy should suffer such monstrous change" as that undergone by the enchanted beasts.<sup>22</sup> In Dante's mind, those of the Florentines who were loyal to the Empire were descended from the "pious race of Troy." And it is not inappropriate that Virgil, the enemy of Circe, should be inspired by a being comparable to John the Baptist, the enemy of Salome.

<sup>22</sup> *Aeneid* VII, 1-20.

The Grancontessa will fit this passage no less snugly than Primavera. Dante believed that Florence had fallen through cupidity, the vice of Circe. "The dwellers in that wretched vale," he makes Guido del Duca say, "have so changed their nature that it seems as if Circe had them in her pasturing."<sup>93</sup> Regarding this vision from the political viewpoint, we may say that Circe is here exposed by that earlier Florence which is soon to return under the *pax Romana*, and by the Roman Empire itself as symbolized by its prophet, Virgil. Why should we insist upon a theological, or a biographical, or a political interpretation, when all three interpretations are in perfect accord?

Thus far we have considered two visions. In the first, Lucia is mentioned by name; in the second, her influence is strongly suggested. Both of these visions, however, agree with what we know of Matelda, who awaits the wanderers on her mountain-top.

The third vision, to which we now turn, unmistakably points both backward to Lucia and Beatrice at the beginning of the *Inferno*, and forward to Matelda and Beatrice at the end of *Purgatory*. In *Purgatory* XXVII, Virgil, Statius and Dante, soon after passing through the flames, prepare to rest for the night.<sup>94</sup> Dante notices that the stars are uncommonly large and bright, and falls asleep as he muses.<sup>95</sup> And at the hour when Venus, the morning-star, appears in the sky, he sees a vision of Leah, who sings of herself and of her sister Rachel.<sup>96</sup>

Now the star of Venus is the guiding star of Dante and of all Christians, for it represents the two great paths of human conduct. The two aspects of Venus are as she appears at dawn and at dusk, now Lucifer, now Hesperus, "wooing the sun now with nape, and now with brow."<sup>97</sup> As we are told in the heaven of Venus itself,<sup>98</sup> the first aspect signifies love of the Sun, or God, when it provides a stimulus in the Active Life;

<sup>93</sup> *Purg.* XIV, 40-42.

<sup>94</sup> *Purg.* XXVII, 16 ff.

<sup>95</sup> *Ib.*, 91-93.

<sup>96</sup> *Ib.*, 94-108.

<sup>97</sup> *Par.* VIII, 12.

<sup>98</sup> *Par.* VIII-IX.

while the second aspect signifies love of God for His own loveliness, as in the Contemplative Life.

In her twofold meaning, Venus may be taken as the symbol of the Virgin Mary, for only in her do the direct and indirect service of God perfectly unite.<sup>99</sup> This star it is that guides the wanderer to his native shore. "Mary," says St. Bonaventure, "is a most precious star guiding us to our heavenly country, nay, guiding us over the sea of this life to the grace of her son, even to the gate of Paradise."<sup>100</sup> How exactly this corresponds to the poetic situation! Through the influence of this star, Dante is led to a redeemed Florence, and to his heavenly home; to the smile of Beatrice, representing both the favor of Can Grande and the grace of Christ; and to the gate of Paradise, representing both the portal of heaven and the actual "gate of St. Peter" in Florence.<sup>101</sup>

We may remind ourselves that Dante does not actually see the star, but an embodiment of one aspect of that star in the person of Leah. Since the star appears at dawn and not at even, only Leah figures in the vision, though in her song she describes her sister. Leah's connection with the Active Life, and Rachel's with the Contemplative, are made plainly evident. "She is fain to behold her fair eyes, as I to deck me with my hands: her, contemplation; me, action, doth satisfy."<sup>102</sup> Leah and Rachel in the Old Testament correspond, of course, to Martha and Mary in the New.

Leah and Rachel as described in this vision remind us of Lucia and Beatrice in *Inferno* II. Although the symbolic fluidity of Beatrice makes it necessary for Dante to select St. Bernard as the pure type of the Contemplative Life, Beatrice may stand for the Contemplative Life in relation to Lucia. She is Love of God gazing downward and upward, both as reflecting His light to lower intelligences, and as receiving that light through contemplation of the Sun itself. "Rachel my

<sup>99</sup> Albertus Magnus, *De laudibus b. Mariae Virg.*, IV, xxxv, 2: "Ratione utriusque vitae, activae scilicet et contemplativae, signata est per Leam et Rachelem. . . . Sed [Maria] perfecta fuit in utraque vita, quod neutra sororum istarum."

<sup>100</sup> *Speculum b. Mariae Virg.*, lect. III.

<sup>101</sup> *Par. XVI*, 94-96.

<sup>102</sup> *Purg. XXVII*, 106-108: "Lei lo vedere, e me l'oprire appaga." The Temple Classics translation is here rather an interpretation, but one that seems justified.

sister," sings Leah, "ne'er stirs from her mirror, and sitteth all day."<sup>103</sup> And Beatrice, when Lucia came to summon her to Dante's aid, was "sitting with the ancient Rachel."<sup>104</sup> Are we not tempted to imagine that Lucia, before Mary's summons, was "sitting" with the ancient *Leah*? In any case Lucia and Beatrice represent the complementary aspects of the Virgin Mary which are combined in the star of Venus. The functions of the star, as it were, separate themselves, and the former becomes a guide to the latter.

In this world, the Active Life and the Contemplative Life are two parallel paths toward human felicity. But the latter, as associated with the philosopher and the priest, is necessarily of greater dignity. In another sense, also, all life in this world is active, when compared to the contemplative joys of the heavenly life; so that the Active Life is the precursor, and in a measure the handmaiden, of the Contemplative Life.<sup>105</sup> The former is to the latter as Matilda's Florence to the City of God, as Leah to Rachel, as Martha to Mary, as John the Baptist to Christ, as Monna Vanna to Monna Bice.

To this list we might add, "as Grace Prevenient to Grace Subsequent." Just as the Virgin includes both the Active and the Contemplative Life, so she includes both Prevenient and Subsequent Grace: the former as the *ancilla domini*, the meek and bewildered Jewish woman chosen as the Lord's instrument; the latter as Queen of Heaven. We may also say that the relations between Prevenient and Subsequent Grace are analogous to those between the Active and the Contemplative Life. Thus the progress of Dante is from Active Life and Prevenient Grace to Contemplative Life and Subsequent Grace.

In *Purgatory*, the dual functions of Mary are shared by Matilda and Beatrice as they are in *Inferno* II by Lucia and Beatrice. Most commentators have recognized that the vision of Leah in *Purgatory* XXVII points directly forward to Matilda. Leah sings and gathers flowers; so does Matilda.<sup>106</sup> We should note also her statement that the psalm *Delectasti*—"For thou, Lord, hast made me glad through thy work: I will triumph in

<sup>103</sup> *Purg.* XXVII, 104-105.

<sup>104</sup> *Inf.* II, 103.

<sup>105</sup> That Dante held this view is evident from *Convito* IV, 17.

<sup>106</sup> *Purg.* XXVII, 97-99; XXVIII, 40-42.

the works of thy hands"—provides an explanation of her happy behavior.<sup>107</sup> A link between her and the star is furnished when the poet addresses her as "fair lady, who at love's beams dost warm thyself."<sup>108</sup>

But Matelda is associated with the Virgin Mary in a much more significant manner. Her explanation of the fact that the Earthly Paradise is moved only by the First Mover<sup>109</sup> is suggestive of the stainless birth of Christ. Mary conceived through the operation within her of the First Cause, without the agency of any mediate intelligence. In the Earthly Paradise, "the primal motion . . . strikes on this eminence, which is all free in the pure air; . . . and the smitten plant has such power that with its virtue it impregnates the air."<sup>110</sup> Was not the Virgin a "smitten plant" in a similar sense? God is to Mary as the *primum mobile* to Eden. "Were this understood, it would not then seem a marvel yonder when some plant takes root there without manifest seed."<sup>111</sup> In this connection the following lines applied by Dante to Matelda demand reverent scrutiny: "I do not believe that so bright a light shone forth under the eyelids of Venus, pierced by her son, against all his wont. She smiled from the right bank opposite, gathering more flowers with her hands, which the high land bears without seed."<sup>112</sup> The association of ideas seems manifest.

The fabric of Dante's allegory is so closely woven, with every thread organically related to every other thread, that to interpret a single line often involves an interpretation of the entire *Comedy*. Hence what seems very clear to him who approaches the work from one viewpoint may seem very cloudy to him who approaches the work from a different viewpoint. Some readers, however, will be ready to share my belief that the concluding cantos of *Purgatory* fulfill the promise held out in *Inferno* II. To make one desperate effort at simplification, we may say that the *Divine Comedy* portrays the influence upon Dante of the twofold way of life and the twofold grace summed up in the

<sup>107</sup> *Purg.* XXVIII, 79-81.

<sup>108</sup> *Ib.*, 43-44; 64-66.

<sup>109</sup> *Purg.* XXVIII, 88 ff.

<sup>110</sup> *Ib.*, 103-111.

<sup>111</sup> *Ib.*, 115-117.

<sup>112</sup> *Ib.*, 64-69.

Virgin Mary. First, although at the beginning of the poem he has already "refound" himself,<sup>113</sup> he must, for the sake of the spiritual drama, undergo a symbolic loss of light. That is the *Inferno*. Next, in order to be worthy of contemplation, he must be purified in the upward-yearning Active Life. That is *Purgatory*. Finally, he is granted a taste of contemplation in order that he may better serve the world. That is *Paradise*.

Action for the sake of contemplation, and contemplation for the sake of action—that phrase expresses the theme of the *Comedy*. And when Matelda and Beatrice stand side by side on the banks of Eunoe, that theme is symbolically set before our eyes. They are Spring and Love, John the Baptist and Christ, the two halves of the heart of Mary. As Lucia, Matelda had urged Beatrice to succor her servant. Now, as the Baptist, she prepares that servant, at Beatrice's bidding, for his ascent to the stars.

The reader may ask why Matelda, if her function is that of Lucia, is not called Lucia outright. But Lucia is firmly fixed in Paradise. Before long Dante is to see her sitting "contro al maggior padre di famiglia."<sup>114</sup> Having already attained heaven, she cannot with either theological or dramatic fitness be demoted to purgatory. Moreover, Dante needs the name "Matelda" to enforce the very important political allegory. We should say, not that Matelda is Lucia, but that she performs in the Earthly Paradise a function like that which Lucia performs in the heavenly machinery of the poem.

If anyone still hungers for an "identification," I can only express the opinion that in creating this character Dante had in mind two women: the Countess Matilda and Giovanna-Primavera. But that, as I have tried to suggest, is a relatively unimportant point. The essence of Matelda is *precursorship*, and the medieval way of dealing with her would be to fill her full of precursors.

This is precisely what Dante has done. Toward the end of *Purgatory* XXII—after the Siren vision but before the Leah vision—the progress of the three poets is hindered by a tree, from which emerges a voice reciting examples of temperance. The whole passage must be quoted:

<sup>113</sup> *Inf.* I, 1-2.

<sup>114</sup> *Par.* XXXII, 136-138.

"Mary thought more how the wedding-feast might be honorable and complete, than of her own mouth, which now answers for you. And the Roman women of old were content with water for their drink, and Daniel despised food and gained wisdom. The first age was fair as gold; it made acorns savory with hunger, and every stream nectar with thirst. Honey and locusts were the meat which nourished the Baptist in the wilderness; therefore he is glorious, and so great as in the gospel is revealed to you."<sup>115</sup>

In this passage, the emphasis placed upon mere physical abstemiousness should not deceive the reader. Temperance of the stomach is here a symbol of temperance in the broader sense. For Dante, the great sin is cupidity—wrongful desire of all sorts. Its antidote is rejection of such desire, or temperance. This is the ethics of Lethe, Matelda's river. Eventually it must be supplemented by the more positive and expansive ethics of Eunoe, Beatrice's river.

Now if this voice, which here expresses the whole ethical theme of *Purgatory*, is not the voice of Matelda, it at least sums up Matelda's symbolic associations. Each example of temperance applies in itself to Matelda, and suggests other examples which apply to her equally well.

"Mary thought more how the wedding-feast might be honourable and complete, than of her own mouth." Here is Mary, of course, in the Active Life—the morning-star aspect of her nature represented by Lucia, Leah and Matelda. In a sense, this example of temperance includes all the others.

"And the Roman women of old were content with water for their drink." We are reminded of Cacciaguida's description of temperate and virtuous Florence under the Countess. In the symbolic background of this statement stand the figures of Cato, Martia and no doubt many others whose names would leap to the lips of the medieval commentator. These good Romans illustrate the Active Life; several of them are touched by the ray of Prevenient Grace; from them the Holy Roman Empire, championed by Countess Matilda, is descended.

"Daniel despised food and gained wisdom." Like the men of old Rome, and like Countess Matilda, Daniel resisted tyranny

<sup>115</sup> *Purg.* XXII, 142-154.

and prophesied the triumph of the Chosen People. He is also an outstanding example of Preventive Grace, and one of the line of Hebrews who point forward to Christ as Matelda points forward to Beatrice. Here the medieval interpreter could expand "ad lib.," using Moses, Elijah and the Baptist, and perhaps connecting Elijah with Cato.

"The first age was fair as gold." Cacciaguida, as we have seen, describes old-time Florence in terms applicable to the Golden Age; and Matelda explicitly identifies Golden Age and Earthly Paradise. Background figures here are Proserpina and Eve.

"Honey and locusts were the meat which nourished the Baptist in the wilderness." John's connection with Matelda, and his part in the allegory, have been sufficiently explained. Behind him stand a whole line of historical precursors and servants of God in the Active Life. Behind him also stands the Countess Matilda, of whose Florence John was patron saint. And by her side, or even further in the background, stands Giovanna-Primavera.

These, be it said once more, are not identifications, but implications suggested by the function of Matelda in the poem. Further analysis along these lines would bring out still more numerous and more minute points of correspondence between her and the precursors for whom she stands, but only at the expense of displeasing those who are suspicious of medieval allegory even in medieval allegorical poetry. I should like, also, to argue that Dante's allegorical structure coincides with the medieval view of the universe as a chain of causes in which every intelligence contains the "form" of some lower intelligence; but to do so would be to incur the charge of having applied scholastic philosophy to this completely scholastic poet.

It seems best, therefore, to drop the subject with one question: Does not this method of interpretation, however crudely applied in the present instance, give greater coherence and point to Dante's allegory than the more common fashion of insisting that Matelda *is* the Grancontessa *or* Primavera *or* St. Mechtilde?

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## MISCELLANEOUS THE ROMANCES OF CHRÉTIEN DE TROYES

### I

IN reading the court romances of Chrétien de Troyes, one is struck at once by their episodic nature and by certain decided faults of composition—in places almost a lack of composition—which seem inexcusable in a poet of Chrétien's ability. I look for the explanation of this episodic nature in the way in which the romances were composed; in other words, I believe that, as is generally thought to be the case with Pulci's *Morgante*, they were composed at the command of a patron to be recited from day to day. Each romance, then, would become a sort of continued story, and should be regarded as a series of chapters rather than as a single composition.

From this point of view, the nature of the romances is easily explained. The poet probably had the rough outline of his story in mind before beginning, but he would fill in the details as he went along. Any exciting adventure or amusing anecdote that came to his attention he would incorporate in his poem whether it fitted or not. Just as in telling a bedtime story to children one supplements one's invention with bits of fairy-tale and mythology, so Chrétien padded out *Erec* with the *Joy of the Court*, and *Yvain* with the story of the *King of the Isle of the Maidens*, which has all the appearance of a tale heard and not wholly understood or remembered.

In the same way the damsel, who after begging Lancelot to spare the life of a conquered knight hastens away for fear that Lancelot will recognize her, seems to be taken bodily from some story in which her fear is more fully explained. As for the rewards which Lancelot promises and is promised, and which except in one case are never heard of again, the poet in all likelihood simply forgot about them from one day to the next.

Besides Chrétien's faults of composition, Gaston Paris criticizes his "interminable monologues,"<sup>1</sup> especially those in the

<sup>1</sup> G. Paris, *Mélanges de Littérature française au moyen age*, Paris, 1910, i, p. 246.

first part of *Cligès*. It is true that for us the complaints of Soredamors and Alixandre lack the charm which they must have had for the original audience, who doubtless looked meaningfully at such a lady while Soredamors was sighing, and at such a knight during the lament of Alixandre. But if we suppose that the monologues were distributed over two or three days, then there is no reason why they should have appeared interminable to the original audience. It is only because we read them all at one sitting that they fail to hold our attention and our interest.

Thus to the poet and his audience, the faults of composition so apparent to the reader, and especially to the re-reader, were of little consequence; and the digressions, if not justified in the poem as a whole, had their place in a recitation from day to day.

If, then, the court romances of Chrétien were composed and recited from day to day, they ought to fall into natural divisions, each more or less complete in itself, and of a suitable length for recitation. In determining these divisions for the present study, I considered two things: subject-matter and sentence-structure. That is to say, a division was made only at the end of an episode (or if the episode were very long, at a convenient stopping-place) that fell between two lines not connected by any relative word. For example, a division could hardly begin with "he was riding along," because the audience would have forgotten to whom the pronoun *he* referred. Needless to say, a division was never made between the two lines of a rhymed couplet.

In the tables<sup>2</sup> which I have given at the end of this article, I have starred those divisions which I call "good," and which are complete as to both subject-matter and sentence-structure. Those not starred do not fulfill the second requirement; that is, the subject of the opening sentence is often a pronoun instead of a noun. The tables show that the good divisions are far more numerous: *Erec* has fourteen good divisions as against five poor ones; *Cligès* fifteen, as against one; *Lancelot* thirteen, as against four; *Yvain* ten, as against one.<sup>3</sup> The poor divisions

<sup>2</sup> I have left *Perceval* out of the present discussion, since a critical edition of it has not yet appeared.

<sup>3</sup> In the case of *Erec*, *Cligès*, and *Lancelot*, the introduction was evidently composed after the rest of the poem. The first division is obviously good.

may very well be due to the copyist rather than to the poet. Later copyists in particular, writing the poem as a whole, would have no interest in its divisions, and finding the repetition of a proper name tedious, might replace the name by a pronoun.

It remains to be seen whether the divisions thus made are of a suitable length for recitation. Let us reconstruct as far as possible the circumstances under which they would have been recited. The men of Henri de Champagne's court have been out all day, riding, hunting, or jousting. They return in the evening to dine heavily, and it is then that the Countess Marie calls upon her poets for entertainment. Chrétien finds at least half his listeners in a more or less somnolent state. His business is to keep them amused, and he is careful to adapt the length of his recitation to their mood. As long as he has their attention, he will develop his theme; but at the first sign of restlessness he hastens to bring his story to a close.

The divisions that I found take on the average twenty minutes to read aloud. The recitation may have been accompanied by music, in which case it would, of course, have lasted longer. If Chrétien was only one of a group of entertainers, of whom some provided less intellectual amusement, he would hardly have been allotted more than twenty minutes or half-an-hour. It is interesting to note that the divisions of the *Yvain* are longer than those of the preceding poems,—an indication, to my mind, of the poet's increasing popularity.

In reconstructing the scene of Chrétien's recitation, I placed it at the court of Champagne. As a matter of fact, the *Lancelot* is the only one of the four romances under discussion which we know was composed for Marie de Champagne. The other three have no dedication; but I think it not improbable that they, too, were composed for Marie. Chrétien's early poems: *les Comandemanz d'Ovide*, *le Mors de l'Espaule*, and others, would have brought him to the attention of the countess, who would have summoned him to her court. Under her patronage he would have composed *Erec*, *Cligès*,<sup>4</sup> *Lancelot*, and *Yvain*. At that time

<sup>4</sup> Cf. G. Paris, *op. cit.*, i, p. 296: ". . . il est intéressant de constater que ces règles (*Regulae Amoris*, of André le Chapelain) étaient déjà connues au temps de la composition de *Cligès*, et cela nous montre d'autre part que Chrétien, en écrivant ce roman, était dans le même état d'esprit et subissait l'influence du même milieu qu'en écrivant, sans doute bien peu après, le *Chevalier de la Charrette*."

a poet's verses were apparently preserved at the command of his patron by a scribe who took them down as they were recited; for parchment was beyond the means of all but the wealthy. Chrétien would have known how to read and write, if he was a cleric as Bédier supposes; but there is no reason to believe that he should have departed from the usual custom and written down his works himself. If, then, the first four romances were composed at the court of Marie, this would explain why they have been preserved, whereas the other works of Chrétien mentioned in the opening lines of *Cligès* have not come down to us.<sup>5</sup>

Furthermore *Yvain* refers back very definitely to the *Lancelot* (l. 4740-4745; l. 3704-3715, and l. 3918-3939). Now Chrétien's popularity might have been so great that everyone knew the *Lancelot* by heart when *Yvain* was composed; but it is more logical to suppose the same audience for both poems.

I have said that Chrétien probably had the rough outline of his poem in mind before beginning to compose the actual lines. In the *Cligès* this outline seems to have been fairly well developed, and the story of the *Lancelot* is generally thought to have been supplied by Marie de Champagne.<sup>6</sup> But the five-part system which Voretzsch elaborates in his *Einführung in das Studium der altfranzösischen Litteratur*<sup>7</sup> is inconsistent with the loose and flexible construction that a composition from day to day presupposes. Voretzsch divides the romances into three main parts: exposition, chief adventure, and conclusion, each part being separated from the next by a series of adventures which serve to interrupt and retard the main action. These adventures form two subordinate, transitional parts, making with the three already mentioned five in all.

The idea of the five-part system was evidently suggested by line 1844 of the *Erec*: "Ci fine li premerains vers," which Voretzsch takes as the closing line of the first part. There are, however, no other such closing lines either in the rest of the *Erec* or in the *Cligès*, *Lancelot*, or *Yvain*. Line 1844 looks, rather,

<sup>5</sup> Except possibly the *Philomena*.

<sup>6</sup> For a discussion of "matière et sen" cf. *Romania*, Vol. 44 (1915-17), p. 14 ff.: Wm. A. Nitze, *Sans et Matière dans les Oeuvres de Chrétien de Troyes*.

<sup>7</sup> Halle a. S., 1905, p. 299 ff.

like the addition of a copyist who was perhaps limited as to parchment and forced to divide the poem.<sup>8</sup>

In the *Erec*, according to Voretzsch, the carrying off of Enide and her subsequent rescue form the chief adventure, or third part, those adventures leading up to it forming the second, retarding part. The carrying off of Enide seems to me, on the contrary, the culminating adventure of a whole series to prove the undiminished prowess of Erec and the undiminishing love of Enide. The one episode absolutely extraneous to the story, the *Joy of the Court*, was evidently put in just before the end to draw out the poem a little longer.

To make the *Cligès* conform to the system, Voretzsch is obliged to count the first 2382 lines, dealing with the love of Soredamors and Alixandre, as a sort of introductory story, and to begin his exposition with line 2383. The conclusion, of only eighty-two lines, is hardly long enough to be called a part at all. Finally, the main adventure, from the return of *Cligès* to the hiding of the lovers in the tower, contains one of those retarding elements which belong properly to the second and fourth parts, namely, the incident of the three doctors of Salerna. So likewise in the *Lancelot*, the main adventure, from the crossing of the Bridge of the Sword to the second meeting with Guinevere, contains the whole retarding episode of the feigned wrath of the queen, the capture of Lancelot and his attempted suicide. So also in the *Yvain*, the fight with the giant interrupts the main adventure of the rescue of Lunete.

*Erec*, the romance that suggested the five-part system, best conforms to it; *Yvain* conforms to it least. Indeed the only possible explanation of the composition of *Yvain* is, in my opinion, that which I have proposed. We are confronted with a series of tales,<sup>9</sup> evidently not of Chrétien's own invention, some drawn from classic antiquity, others probably of Celtic origin, all bound together by a thread which is at times very slender indeed and which does not conceal the disparity of the

<sup>8</sup> The same thing holds for the three preceding lines which are closely bound up with line 1844.

<sup>9</sup> The incident of the churl who guards the wild bulls, the magic fountain, the theme of the Matron of Ephesus and of Androcles and the lion, the madness of the hero, the story of the giant and that of the King of the Isle of the Maidens.

parts that it binds. The *Yvain* is not a development of the Matron of Ephesus theme, of the Androcles theme, or of a Celtic fairy-tale, but a combination of all three. The connecting thread, as in the *Lancelot*, is the service which a perfect knight owes his lady. *Erec*, *Cligès*, and *Lancelot* have given their author practice in the weaving together of diverse elements and confidence in his powers as a story-teller. For the *Yvain*, he no longer needs even a rough outline.

The same loose construction of the romances that seems to preclude the five-part system suggested the idea that they were composed for daily recitation. Whether or not the divisions which I have proposed are exactly those of Chrétien is of minor importance. The existence of some such divisions, however, would solve the problem of the episodic nature of the poems and explain why Chrétien was, as Gaston Paris observes, "un conteur adroit dans le détail, parfois maladroit dans l'ensemble."<sup>10</sup>

## II

The following tables give the proposed divisions of the romances, the good ones being starred, and indicate briefly the substance of each division:

## EREc

## I-26, Introduction.

1, \*27-274, The hunt of the white deer; the knight with the dwarf; 2, \*275-546, Erec lodges with the poor knight; 3, \*547-746, The falcon; 4, \*747-1080, Erec vanquishes the knight of the dwarf; 5, \*1081-1478, The poor knight gives Erec his daughter; 6, \*1479-1844, Reception at Arthur's court; 7, \*1845-2134, Wedding of Erec and Enide; 8, \*2135-2764, Enide reproaches Erec for his lethargy; they set off together; 9, \*2765-3208, Erec vanquishes eight knights; 10, 3209-3458, The count; Enide's ruse; 11, \*3459-3662, Erec vanquishes the count; 12, \*3663-3930, Guivrez; 13, \*3931-4278, Kay, Gauvain, and Arthur's court; 14, \*4279-4776, Erec vanquishes two giants; Enide carried off by the count of Limors; 15, \*4777-4936, Erec and Enide escape from Limors; 16, \*4937-5170, Meeting with Guivrez; 17, 5171-5366, Erec cured by Guivrez' sisters; 18,

<sup>10</sup> Paris, *loc. cit.*, p. 247.

5367–5668, The king Evrains; 19, 5669–6410, The Joy of the Court; 20, 6411–6958, Coronation of Erec.

CLIGÈS

I–44, Introduction.

1, \*45–440, Alixandre leaves Greece for King Arthur's court; 2, \*441–872, Love of Soredamors and Alixandre; complaint of Soredamors; 3, \*873–1260, Complaint of Alixandre; preparations for battle; 4, \*1261–1514, Punishment of the four traitors; 5, \*1515–2146, Capture of the castle; 6, \*2147–2382, Marriage of Soredamors and Alixandre; birth of Cligès; 7, \*2383–2706, Death of Alixandre; Alis in Germany; 8, \*2707–3250, Love of Férence and Cligès; Thessala's ruse; 9, \*3251–3620, Marriage of Férence and Alis; battle with the duke; 10, \*3621–4010, Férence carried off, rescued by Cligès; 11, \*4011–4628, Duel between Cligès and the duke; Cligès in Brittany; 12, \*4629–5114, Tournament; 13, \*5115–5554, Return of Cligès; 14, \*5555–5814, The tower; Férence feigns death; 15, \*5815–6050, Three doctors of Salerna; 16, \*6051–6346, The lovers in the tower; 17, 6347–6784, Discovery of lovers; death of Alis.

LANCELOT

I–30, Introduction.

1, \*31–246, Kay rides off with the queen; 2, \*247–714, Lancelot and Gauvain in quest of the queen: the cart, the fiery lance; 3, \*715–940, The ford; 4, 941–1368, Lancelot and the wandering damsels; 5, \*1369–1660, The comb; knight challenges Lancelot for damsels; 6, \*1661–2008, Outcome of challenge; the cemetery; 7, \*2009–2450, Battle between Logrians and followers of Meleaganz; 8, \*2451–3020, Lancelot kills insulting knight, arrives at Bridge of the Sword; 9, 3021–3504, Lancelot crosses the bridge; Bademaguz and Meleaganz; 10, 3505–3954, Duel of Lancelot and Meleaganz; 11, \*3955–4424, Despair of Lancelot at wrath of Guinevere; 12, 4425–4754, Reconciliation of Lancelot and Guinevere; 13, \*4755–5256, Disappearance of Lancelot; rescue of Gauvain; 14, \*5257–5594, Return of Guinevere; preparations for tournament; 15, \*5595–6166, Tournament; imprisonment of Lancelot; 16, \*6167–6458,

Meleaganz at Arthur's court; 17, \*6459-6728, Release of Lancelot; 18, \*6729-7134, Death of Meleaganz.

### YVAIN

1, \*1-722, Calogrenant's story: the churl, the magic fountain; 2, \*723-1172, Yvain kills the knight of the fountain and is imprisoned; 3, \*1173-1588, Yvain falls in love with Laudine; 4, \*1589-1942, Lunete reconciles Laudine; 5, \*1943-2638, Reception for Arthur's court; Yvain rides off with Gauvain; 6, \*2639-3340, Madness of Yvain; 7, \*3341-3956, Lion; Lunete in difficulty; 8, \*3957-4638, Yvain fights with giant, delivers Lunete; 9, \*4639-5106, Daughters of Noire Espine; 10, 5107-5770, Castle of Evil Adventure; 11, \*5771-6526, Duel between Gauvain and Yvain; 12, \*6527-6818, Reconciliation of Yvain and Laudine.

### III

A statistical treatment of my results seems almost absurd, when one considers the many sources of error and variation: the changes in the text made by copyists, the circumstances that on a particular evening might have lengthened or shortened the recitation, the tempo set by the subject-matter,—slow for a discussion of love, more rapid for the description of a duel. I offer, however, for what they may be worth, the following Tables:

Table I shows the average number of lines in the 'good' divisions and their average deviation.

TABLE I

Erec.....	326 ± 98	(10, 17, 18, 19, 20 omitted)
Cligès.....	394 ± 98	(17 omitted)
Lancelot.....	379 ± 103	(4, 9, 10, 12 omitted)
Yvain.....	559 ± 140	(10 omitted)

The 'good' divisions are, however, not always well bounded. Thus, a 'good' division followed by a 'poor' one, while 'good' as to the opening line, is probably 'poor' as to its closing line. I add, therefore, in Table II, the average number of lines in all divisions, 'good' and 'poor,' with their average deviation. It will be seen that the results are, in both cases, very nearly the

same, and that in only one instance does the average deviation exceed one-third of the average.

TABLE II

Erec . . . . .	347 ± 120
Cligès . . . . .	396 ± 96
Lancelot . . . . .	395 ± 94
Yvain . . . . .	568 ± 144

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## LES IDÉES ESTHÉTIQUES DE M<sup>LE</sup> DE SCUDÉRY

DEPUIS VICTOR COUSIN c'est un lieu commun de l'histoire littéraire que M<sup>le</sup> de Scudéry est la créatrice du roman psychologique en France.<sup>1</sup> Mais ce sont la *Carte de Tendre* et la fameuse anatomie du cœur, ce sont les interminables cours d'amour dans le *Grand Cyrus* et *Clélie* qui étaient toujours la base de cette opinion.

Chose curieuse, les historiens du roman au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle<sup>2</sup> ne connaissent guère la préface d'*Ibrahim*, premier roman de Madeleine. Sainte-Beuve<sup>3</sup> fait mention du passage de *Clélie* où Scudéry se prononce sur *l'art de composer* des fables, Waldeberg<sup>4</sup> cite le même passage tiré du second volume des *Conversations sur divers sujets*, qui publiées vingt ans après *Clélie*, ne sont que des extraits des romans de notre auteur.

Mais la préface d'*Ibrahim* ne pourrait être négligée dans l'histoire du roman français: elle fait voir que dès 1641, M<sup>le</sup> de Scudéry avait une conception très nette, bien qu'erronée du roman. Elle veut suivre les grands *exemples*, elle désire observer des *règles*: "Chaque Art a ses regles qui . . . mènent à la fin qu'on se propose." En vraie élève d'Horace, elle veut imiter les auteurs grecs: "Dans ces fameux Romans de l'Antiquité, à l'imitation du Poeme Epique, il y a une action principale, où toutes les autres sont attachées, qui regne par tout l'ourrage; qui fait qu'elles n'y sont employées que pour la conduire à la perfection." Elle demande que les épisodes ne soient point oiseux, "que l'on n'y puisse voir rien de détaché ny d'inutile." Ce sont les préceptes d'Horace qu'elle suivra pour la construction, ce qu'elle oublie d'ailleurs de dire; les anciens avaient commencé par "le milieu pour donner la suspension au lecteur des l'ouverture du Liure." Conformément à cette règle, elle a commencé tous ses romans *in media re*; elle y a dérogé seulement

<sup>1</sup> *La Société française au XVII<sup>e</sup> Siècle*, II, 124.

<sup>2</sup> Koerting, Morillot, Le Breton, Wurzbach, Saintsbury.

<sup>3</sup> *Causeries du Lundi*, IV, 132.

<sup>4</sup> *Der sentimentale Roman in Frankreich*, I, Trübner, Strassburg, 1906.

dans *Mathilde d'Aguilar*, son dernier ouvrage et ce n'est pas un roman, mais une nouvelle. A l'instar de la tragédie, dont l'action ne peut durer que vingt-quatre heures, "les anciens ont fait (et moy après eux) que l'Histoire ne dure qu'une année & que le reste est par narration."

Mais *Sapho* se rend bien compte que la construction n'est pas l'unique qualité essentielle du bon roman: "Entre toutes les règles . . . celle de la vraysemblance est la plus nécessaire, elle est comme la pierre fondamentale de ce bastiment. . . . I'ay donc essayé de ne m'en éloigner iamais, j'ay obserué pour cela les mœurs, les coûumes, les loix, les religions et les inclinations des peuples,"<sup>5</sup> Voilà la demande de la couleur locale, formulée bien avant le romantisme, même bien avant Boileau. Malheureusement, on sait comment Sapho a suivi cette règle,— le *Brutus galant* et le *bureau d'esprit de Lucrèce* en sont de frappantes caricatures. Mais ajoutons que l'*Ibrahim* est le roman le moins caricatural de Madeleine: c'est son ouvrage le plus lisible et le plus sain.<sup>6</sup>

Tous les romans de Scudéry appartiennent au genre pseudo-historique. La paraphrase suivante de l'*Art Poétique* d'Horace<sup>7</sup> fournit la preuve que ce n'est pas par hasard qu'elle a mis l'action de ses romans au passé: "I'ay voulu que les fondemens de mon ouvrage fussent historiques, mes principaux personnages marquez dans l'Histoire véritable, comme les personnes illustres & les guerres effectiues." Si le lecteur sait que tel ou tel roi, telle ou telle reine ne sont que des caractères inventés par l'auteur, il ne peut être touché par leurs aventures imaginaires. Ainsi, suivant la bonne recette d'Horace,<sup>8</sup> "le mensonge & la vérité sont confondus par une main adroite, l'esprit a peine à

<sup>5</sup> Des siècles, des pays étudiez les mœurs:

Les climats font souvent les diverses humeurs (*Art poétique*, III, 113-4).

<sup>6</sup> L'*Ibrahim* fut trop négligé par l'histoire littéraire: c'est une remarquable transition entre le roman galant et le roman réaliste. L'influence espagnole y est évidente: l'*Histoire du feint Astrologue* est le remaniement d'une *comedia* de Calderón de la Barca (*El Astrólogo Fingido*), l'*histoire du Trop bon Esclave* est une imitation de la nouvelle picaresque.

<sup>7</sup> Ex noto fictum carmen separar (Epist. ad Pisones, 240).

Rectius Iliacum carmen deducis in actus

Quam si proferres ignota indicataque primus (Epist. ad Pisones, 129-130).

<sup>8</sup> Atque ita mentitur, sic veris falsa remiscet,

Primo ne medium, medio ne discrepet imum (Epist. ad Pis. 151-2).

les demesler & ne se porte pas aisement à detruire ce qui luy plaist."

Donc le cadre historique du roman n'était point un élément essentiel aux yeux de M<sup>me</sup> de Scudéry, comme il le fut pour le roman historique depuis le romantisme. Ce n'est qu'un prétexte pour ne pas sortir des bornes de la vraisemblance. Mais en même temps, par une singulière tendance au réalisme<sup>9</sup> et tout en copiant certaines idées d'Horace, elle anticipe ce Boileau qui l'a rendue impossible à tout jamais.<sup>10</sup>

Le passage suivant de la préface d'*Ibrahim* nous rappelle encore les invectives de Boileau. C'est une critique sévère des romans d'Amadis et, peut-être, une allusion au *Polexandre* de Gomberville: "Nous auons autrefois veu des Romans qui nous produisaient des Monstres; en pensant nous faire voir des Miracles, leurs Autheurs, pour s'attacher trop au merueilleux, ont fait des grotesques, qui tiennent beaucoup des visions de la fièvre chaude." Que les événements soient naturels,—ce qui est plus merveilleux que le surnaturel. Si M<sup>me</sup> de Scudéry n'en était pas restée à la théorie, elle aurait bien pu créer le vrai roman réaliste.

Au nom de la vraisemblance, elle condamne les naufrages, motif si fréquent du roman grec: "C'est par cette raison encore que ie n'ay point causé tant de naufrages, comme il y en a dans quelques anciens romans." Ces auteurs renversent tout l'univers si l'envie leur en prend. "Ce n'est pas que ie pretende bannir les naufrages des Romans . . .," elle les emploie elle-même, "mais comme tout excés est vicieux, ie ne m'en seruis que moderément pour conseruer la vraysemblance. . ." Elle ne veut pas que ses héros passent par tant d'aventures et de vicissitudes que ceux des autres romanciers de son époque,—on se rappelle le mot de Boileau à propos de Mandane!—: ". . . il vaut mieux separer les auantures, en former diuerses Histoires; & faire agir plusieurs personnes; afin de paroistre & d'estre tousiours dans cette vray-semblance si necessaire." Il est

<sup>9</sup> Donc elle prend part à cette générale tendance *naturaliste* de la poésie classique. Cf. G. Lanson: *Boileau*, Paris, Hachette, 1892, p. 95.

<sup>10</sup> On sait que Boileau a respecté Sapho, en dépit de sa mordante satire, qu'il n'a pas publiée du vivant de Madeleine, *ne voulant pas donner ce chagrin à une fille qui après tout, avait beaucoup de mérite* (Discours sur le Dialogue des Héros de Romans).

ridicule qu'un seul héros mette toute une armée en déroute. "Il est hors de doute que pour presenter la véritable ardeur heroïque, il faut luy faire executer quelque chose d'extraordinaire," mais il ne faut pas forcer la note, car autrement "on ne touchera point l'esprit." Qu'on se garde d'une prédilection exagérée des aventures: "Ceux qui ne font qu'entasser auantures sur auantures, sans ornement, & sans exciter les passions par les artifices de la Rhetorique sont ennuyeux."

Il est fort remarquable ce qu'elle entend sous ces "ornemens de la Rhetorique." Elle veut sonder ce que ses caractères ont pensé, nous dirions *éprouvé* dans les différentes situations. N'y voyons pas un dessein prémedité de creuser l'âme humaine à la manière d'un Bourget ou d'un Estaunié,—c'est un prétexte à rhétorique comme les tirades de l'*Enéide* ou celles des *Héroïdes* d'Ovide, qui ont certainement influencé Scudéry, ou les monologues des pseudo-tragédies de Sénèque, lieux communs de l'antiquité; toute considération faite, cette conception primitive ne manque pas d'avoir des rapports directs avec l'analyse psychologique. "Certains auteurs se sont contentez de nous assurer qu'un tel Heros pensa de fort belles choses sans nous les dire & c'est cela seulement que je desirois sauoir. . . . Ce n'est point par les choses du dehors, ce n'est pas par les caprices du destin, que je veux iuger de luy: c'est par le mouvement de son ame et par les choses qu'il dit." Voilà le principe du roman d'analyse bien défini: d'ici à la *Princesse de Clèves*, il n'y a qu'un pas.

Que l'exemple unique soit d'Urfé, le grand et incomparable bucolique. Il mérite sa réputation, il est digne de toutes les louanges qu'on lui a prodigées. Il est fécond en inventions, et—ô surprise!—dans son œuvre tout est naturel et vraisemblable. "Mais entre tant de rares choses, celle que j'estime le plus, est qu'il sait toucher si delicatement les passions qu'on peut le nommer le *Peintre de l'ame*. Il cherche dans le fonds des cœurs les plus secrets sentimens. . . ."

Cet éloge de d'Urfé révèle ce que M<sup>me</sup> de Scudéry s'est proposé pour idéal: description et analyse des sentiments délicats. Mais, surtout, c'est l'encyclopédie de l'amour qu'elle veut écrire, en prédecesseur des théoriciens du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle, Stendhal et Bourget.

Trente ans plus tard, Huet, le savant évêque d'Avranché, reprendra<sup>11</sup> presque textuellement ce que Scudéry pense de la portée morale du roman: "La fin principale des Romans, ou du moins celle qui doit l'être, et que se doivent proposer ceux qui les composent, est l'instruction des lecteurs, à qui il faut toujours faire voir la vertu couronnée, et le vice châtié." Elle fait toujours punir le vice: "I'ay mesme eu soin de faire en sorte que les fautes que les Grands ont commises dans mon Histoire, fussent causées par l'amour ou par l'ambition, qui sont les plus nobles passions." Cette tendance moralisatrice s'accusera dans *Clémie*, en dépit de quoi ses romans furent taxés d'immoralité.<sup>12</sup>

Somme toute, la préface d'*Ibrahim* marque un progrès réel dans l'histoire du roman français avant 1641. Sans le ton cassant de Boileau, Scudéry condamne, au nom de la vraisemblance, le fatras des romans de chevalerie trente-trois ans avant l'*Art Poétique*. La vraisemblance joue le même rôle dans la théorie de Scudéry que la raison dans celle de Boileau. Mais l'héroïsme sentimental est encore trop en vogue pour que Scudéry puisse rompre avec le monde enchanté du roman galant et ainsi, elle n'a fait que prouver la vérité du mot de Goethe concernant la *graue Theorie*. C'est au nom de la vraisemblance et sous l'influence d'Horace qu'elle va écrire des romans historiques ou plutôt, qu'elle va mettre l'action de ses romans au passé,—mais elle ne veut point évoquer le génie des âges par les petits documents humains que le roman de l'humanité, l'histoire n'a pas notés. Ce qui est surprenant, ce sont les passages un peu indécis qui manifestent son intérêt pour les secrets de la vie sentimentale. Ce n'est qu'un ornement de rhétorique destiné à embellir le roman, mais tout compte fait, ne dirait-on pas que le motif de cette rhétorique se rapproche déjà du roman d'analyse, qui affranchi des colifichets du pathos pseudo-classique, s'adonnera sans réserve à l'étude du cœur?

Dix-neuf ans passent. En écrivant le X<sup>e</sup> volume de *Clémie*, Sapho reprendra les problèmes de la préface d'*Ibrahim*. Dans

<sup>11</sup> *Traité de l'Origine des Romans*, 1670. Je le cite d'après l'édition de 1796, p. 4.

<sup>12</sup> "... nonobstant la mauvaise morale enseignée dans ses romans, elle (Scudéry) avait encore plus de probité et d'honneur que d'esprit" (*Discours sur le Dialogue des Héros de Romans*).

le second livre du volume X de *Clélie*, Anacréon donne lecture de l'Histoire d'Hésiode à une compagnie illustre, qui après la lecture, discute les qualités de cette nouvelle. On dit que l'auteur a heureusement paré l'aride vérité historique des productions de son esprit. L'histoire ne sait rien des amours d'Hésiode; il n'avait été que le confident d'un amoureux,— mais voici que le mensonge est plus probable que la vérité. "Lorsqu'on veut faire arriuer des euenements fort extraordinaires, il est sans doute bien plus beau d'y introduire l'amour que nulle autre cause . . . Il a donné de vraysemblance à ce qui n'en auoit guere." Anacréon est le porte-parole de Scudéry et en écho des idées de la préface d'*Ibrahim*, il prétend "qu'un homme qui auroit inuenté ce que l'Histoire dit de cette auanture, auroit fait une mauuaise chose (p. 1124). . . . Le me trouue tout disposé à croire que si cela n'est pas, cela peut auuoir esté, n'y ayant sans doute rien qui establesse mieux une fable bien inuentée que ces fondemens historiques<sup>13</sup> qu'on entrevoit partout & qui font recevoir le mensonge avec la vérité" (p. 1126). Mais il faut bien combiner ces éléments disparates afin que le récit soit vraisemblable: ". . . dés que vous voulez inuenter une fable, vous auez dessein d'estre creu, & le véritable Art du mensonge est de bien ressembler à la vérité . . . assurement les choses qui ont du rapport avec la vérité, & qui paroissent pouuoir arriuer touchent bien plus que celles, qu'on ne peut ni croire ni craindre" (p. 1129). La vérité n'est pas toujours terre-à-terre, tant s'en faut, d'autre part "les choses incroyables & impossibles sont insupportables." Fidèle aux principes d'Horace, elle demande le juste milieu. "Les choses merveilleuses bien loin d'estre deffendues, sont nécessaires, pourueu qu'elles n'arriuent pas trop souuent, & qu'elles produisent de beaux effets, & il n'y a que les choses bizarres ou impossibles qui soient absolument condamnées. Car le moyen d'estre persuadé de rien quand on a une fois trouué des choses qu'on ne peut croire" (p. 1130).

<sup>13</sup> Chapelain s'était déjà servi du même argument aristotélien pour la tragédie dans sa *Lettre sur l'Art dramatique*, cf. Arnaud, *Etude sur l'Abbé d'Aubignac*, 1887, Appendice IV, p. 341. La même idée, appliquée au roman, sera reprise par Huet: "La fiction totale de l'argument est plus recevable dans les Romans dont les acteurs sont de médiocre fortune, comme dans les Romans comiques, que dans les grands Romans dont les princes et les conquérants sont les acteurs. . . ." O.c. pp. 9-10.

Comme la vraisemblance est la force motrice du roman, le romancier ne peut pas se passer du monde réel. C'est encore la voix d'Horace<sup>14</sup> qui sonne par le passage suivant: ". . . il faut regarder le monde comme un peintre regarde son modèle quand il traueille. Et comme la diuersité est l'ame du monde, il se faut bien garder d'aller faire que tous les hommes soient des Heros, que toutes les femmes soient esgalement belles, que les humeurs des uns & des autres soient semblables & que l'amour, la colere, la ialousie & la haine, produisent tousiours les mesmes effets" (pp. 1131-1132). Que l'exemple soit Homère, "ces diuerses personnes qu'Homere introduit . . . agissent selon le temperament qu'il leur a attribué. . . ." <sup>15</sup> Ignorant les petits frissons d'âme involontaires, elle attribue donc à l'homme des passions dominantes, des *facultés maîtresses*, ce qui nous rappelle un peu le procédé de Balzac. Mais sans les mille petits détails documentaires qui les humanisent, les caractères de Scudéry restent des ombres, des abstractions fictives qui manquent de toute vie réelle. A son avis, les passions ont une existence à elles, elle les considère comme des organismes détachés de l'homme: "Sur toutes choses il faut bien connoistre la nature des passions, & ce qu'elles peuvent faire dans le cœur de ceux à qui on les a données, apres les auoir depeintes telles qu'elles sont" (pp. 1133-34).

Ses idées sur la couleur locale se sont précisées depuis 1641. ". . . puisque l'on peut inuenter une histoire, pourquoi ne pourroit-on toutes choses & supposer mesme des Pais qui ne sont point? . . . on en auroit moins de curiosité & l'imagination trouuant toutes choses nouvelles, seroit disposée à douter de tout" (p. 1134). Que l'époque où l'action se passe, ne soit ni trop éloignée ni trop près du présent et "qu'on se donne la peine d'étudier bien le siecle qu'on a choisi; . . . de s'assuettir aux coutumes des lieux dont on parle, de ne faire pas croître des lauriers en des pays où l'on n'en vit iamais; de ne confondre ni

<sup>14</sup> Intererit multum Divusne loquatur, an heros,  
Matusne senex, an adhuc florente juventa  
Fervidus; et matrona potens, an sedula nutritrix;  
Mercatorne vagus, cultorne virentis agelli;  
Colchos, an Assyrius; Thebis nutritus, an Argis (Epist. ad Pis. 114-118).

<sup>15</sup> Si quid inexpertum scenae committis, et audes  
Personam formare novam, servetur ad iumum  
Qualis ab incepto processerit, et sibi constet (Epist. ad Pis. 125-127).

les religions, ni les coutumes des peuples qu'on introduit *quoy qu'on puisse avec iugement les accomoder un peu à l'usage du siecle où l'on vit, afin de plaire davantage*" (p. 1136). Cette conception qui est caractéristique de toute la littérature romanesque avant le romantisme, sanctionne l'anachronisme d'une manière frappante et je ne crois guère qu'on l'ait si franchement exprimé ailleurs.<sup>16</sup> Ainsi, Scudéry fausse l'histoire à son escent: elle y introduit de propos délibéré la mentalité de ses contemporains; c'est pour faciliter la lecture de ses romans, pour les *vulgariser* qu'elle agit de la sorte.

Quelles sont les qualités donc qui font le succès du roman? Elle résume ce qu'elle vient de dire de la vraisemblance et ajoute que le roman sera impeccable si "toutes les petites choses qui font connoistre le fond du cœur y sont placées à propos, que le vice y soit blasmé, & la vertu recompensée, que l'imagination y soit tousiours soumise au iugement, que les euenemens y soient bien fondez, qu'il y ait du sauoir sans affectation, que la galanterie soit partout où il en faut, que le stile n'en soit ni trop esleué ni trop bas & qu'en nul endroit la bienseance ni les bonnes mœurs n'y soient blessées."

Il ne suffit pas que le romancier soit une encyclopédie ambulante: "Pour composer une fable parfaite . . . non seulement il faut auoir tout . . . qui est nécessaire à un excellent Historien, mais il faut encore auoir cent connoissances plus estendues & plus particulières. . . ." Il est fort important que le romancier soit un vrai honnête homme, et une fois de plus: "*il faut sçauoir le secret de tous les cœurs. . . .*"

Reste encore la portée morale du roman. "Sur toutes choses, il faut sçauoir oster à la morale ce qu'elle a de rude & de sec."<sup>17</sup> Et si l'on objecte aux romans amoureux, que fera-t-on de l'histoire universelle qui rapporte des aventures bien plus scabreuses que les romans?<sup>18</sup> D'autant plus que "dans une

<sup>16</sup> C'est absolument différent de la correction poétique de l'histoire que Racine admet dans la deuxième préface d'*Andromaque*: "Il ne faut point s'amuser à chicaner les poètes pour quelques changements qu'ils ont pu faire dans la fable; mais s'attacher à considérer l'excellent usage qu'ils ont fait de ces changements. . . ."

<sup>17</sup> De même Huet: "Mais comme l'homme est naturellement ennemi des enseignemens, et que son amour-propre le révolte contre les instructions, il le faut tromper par l'appas du plaisir, et adoucir la sévérité des préceptes par l'agrément des exemples. . . ." O.c. p. 4.

<sup>18</sup> Est-ce par hasard que Huet emploie le même argument? "Il leur faut donc interdire l'histoire, qui rapporte tant de pernicieux exemples. . . ." O.c. p. 125.

fable de la maniere que ie l'entends . . . la modestie y seroit tousiours iointe avec l'amour & l'on n'y verroit iamais d'amours criminelles qui ne fussent malheureuses." Et la lecture d'un tel roman sera recommandable à tout le monde—aux dames et aux enfants,—ce sera la propagande de la vertu. Même la religion en profitera: l'impiété sera bannie du bon roman et les dieux seront toujours dûment respectés (p. 1144).

Il est manifeste que cette seconde conception des idées de Scudéry n'est que l'approfondissement de ce qu'elle avait déjà arrêté en 1641. Ici, elle insiste un peu davantage sur la vraisemblance et va jusqu'à exiger la copie de la réalité; suivant les instructions d'Horace, elle demande des caractères variés et conséquents. Elle veut sonder les coins et recoins du cœur, connaître à fond la nature des passions. La couleur locale est de rigueur, mais on est libre de rajeunir le passé. Que le romancier soit homme du monde, poète et savant en même temps, *doctus poeta*. Et finalement, elle proteste contre les détracteurs du roman.

On a vu tout cela, ou à peu près, dans la préface d'*Ibrahim*. La différence essentielle est que, en 1660, Sapho insiste davantage sur la connaissance du cœur. Elle demande que les caractères ne se contredisent point dans leurs actions,—ce n'est certes pas de la psychologie impressioniste, on dirait que c'est une version sentimentale du *Traité des Passions* de Descartes. Nul doute, de cette façon elle passe jugement sur tous les romans galants de son temps—y compris les siens. Néanmoins, on peut constater qu'avec la demande de l'étude des *petites choses qui font connoistre le cœur*, le principe du roman psychologique fut définitivement formulé en France,—du moins en théorie.

La connaissance des dates et des faits n'est pas quantité négligeable en dépit des attaques récentes qui se dirigèrent contre l'histoire littéraire *positiviste* en Amérique et en Allemagne. M. Waldberg cite les idées esthétiques de Scudéry du second volume des *Conversations sur divers Sujets*, publié en 1680, ignorant que ce n'est qu'une réimpression textuelle vingt ans après *Clémie*. Mais les paroles de Waldberg jettent une lumière singulière sur l'importance qu'il faut attacher aux opinions de Sapho, *mutatis mutandis*: "Mit rührender Selbstverleugnung

hat hier Mademoiselle de Scudéry das Idealbild einer Erzählung entworfen, das sicher nicht auf ihr eigenes Schaffen berechnet war . . . man merkt deutlich, dass ihr bei den meisten Bestimmungen die zeitgenössische Produktion vorgeschwobt hat . . . *Madame de Lafayette und ihre Nachfolgerinnen haben die praktischen Belege dafür geboten*, und in diesen Grenzen bewegen sich auch die Frauenromane, die nach dem Erscheinen der Scudéryschen Ausführungen in die Öffentlichkeit traten. . . .<sup>19</sup> Aber auch die Forderungen, welche die innere Form betreffen, werden gewissenhaft beachtet und besonders die "petites choses qui font connaître le fond du cœur" mit peinlichster Gewissenhaftigkeit ausgeführt."<sup>20</sup>

Passons sous silence la "modestie touchante" avec laquelle Scudéry se serait placée à l'arrière-plan d'après le pas de clerc du professeur de Heidelberg; par cet "idéal du roman," elle pouvait bien influencer M<sup>me</sup> de La Fayette et ses épigones, mais assurément elle ne s'est point servie de leurs œuvres pour établir les règles de l'art du roman. C'est la *Princesse de Clèves* qui a réalisé les idées de Sapho: la préface d'*Ibrahim* et la poétique de *Clémie* en sont l'avant-propos immédiat et direct. Serait-on trop loin de la vérité en affirmant que ce sont les idées théoriques de Scudéry plutôt que sa *Carte de Tendre* qui ont influencé M<sup>me</sup> de La Fayette.<sup>21</sup> Les innombrables problèmes d'amour dont Scudéry cherche la solution à la manière des cours d'amour fabuleuses du moyen âge, les cas de conscience multiples et alambiqués dont se torturent ses héros et ses héroïnes, nous semblent de vains jeux d'esprit aujourd'hui. Mais tout en analysant la *funeste passion*, abstraction anémique dans ses romans, elle pratiquait déjà cette fameuse *anatomie du cœur*. Ce n'était point de la psychologie individualiste, mais

<sup>19</sup> O.c. p. 188.

<sup>20</sup> O.c. p. 189.

<sup>21</sup> Rappelons encore une fois que des points essentiels de la thèse de Huet, publiée en tête de *Zayde*, ne font que reprendre les idées de Scudéry: a) de même que Scudéry, Huet exige que le roman soit un ouvrage pédagogique, didactique et édifiant; b) il apporte le même argument pour prouver la nécessité du cadre historique; c) en faisant l'apologie du roman, il se réfère aussi à l'histoire universelle; l'éloge de cette *illustre fille* (*Traité*, pp. 128-129) est significatif, bien que Le Breton dise que "au goût de Huet, les ouvrages de Scudéry n'étaient pas encore des romans parfaits" (Le Breton, *Le Roman au XVII<sup>e</sup> Siècle*, Hachette, p. 247).

un répertoire primitif de l'âme de l'Homme, être abstrait ou plutôt extrait de tous les mortels.

Il faut encore appliquer cette analyse générale à un cas individuel,—il ne reste que la mise en pratique de ces idées qui étaient aptes à créer le vrai roman psychologique,<sup>22</sup>—et on aura ce premier roman moderne, la *Princesse de Clèves*.

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<sup>22</sup> Un essai de M. J. Warshaw (*The Epic-Drama Conception of the Novel*, MLN XXXV, 269 ss.) développe la thèse que c'est la tragédie qui avait eu une influence décisive sur la genèse du roman psychologique. Tout en admettant que la *Princesse de Clèves* est "une transposition du tragique cornélien dans le roman" (G. Lanson, *Hist. de la Litt. fr.* 17, p. 490), ne pourrait-on pas supposer qu'il y eut des rapports de filiation directe entre la *Princesse de Clèves* et les idées de Mlle de Scudéry, qui—témoin le cas de Waldberg—projettent une image si vivante du roman d'analyse?

## THE SOURCE OF LOPE DE VEGA'S *EL CASTIGO DEL DISCRETO*

ALTHOUGH several of Lope de Vega's *comedias* have been shown to have their origin in Italian *novelle*, no one has yet, so far as I know, pointed out that *El Castigo del discreto* is based on Bandello's *novella* (I, 35) entitled "Nuovo modo di castigar la moglie ritrovata da un gentiluomo veneziano."<sup>1</sup> Wurzbach, one of the commentators on Lope de Vega's theatre, recognized, it is true, the story of the play as a familiar one, but failed to state, if he knew it, the direct source of the *comedia*.<sup>2</sup> Other critics have been content to note the unusual, farcical nature of the plot.<sup>3</sup>

Possibly the main reason for not suspecting the origin of the play lies in its completely Spanish atmosphere. Even the beating of the adulterous minded wife might seem to indicate as much the influence of native as of Italian farce. At the same time, in adapting Bandello's *novella*, Lope preserved its main outline and characters, not even troubling to change the heroine's name. As in the *novella*, a married woman falls in love with a stranger; her husband intercepts a letter intended for him, appears disguised as the lover and beating her, cures

<sup>1</sup> M. Bandello, *Novelle*, in *Scrittori d'Italia*, vol. v, pp. 48 ff. This *novella* seems to have been the source of a similar tale told by Giraldi Cintio in his *Ecatommithi* (III, 4).

<sup>2</sup> "In *El castigo del discreto* finden wir die alte Geschichte von dem Edelmann, der entdeckt, dass seine Frau ihn betrüge, an Stelle des erwarteten Geliebten bei ihr erscheint und sie so durchprügelt, dass ihr in Zukunft ähnliche Gedanken vergehen." (*Lope de Vega und seine Komödien*, 1899, p. 221.)

<sup>3</sup> Professor Américo Castro, the first to call attention to the play's unusual treatment of a problem of honor, says: "Vuelvo a insistir aquí (v. pág. 29, n.) sobre la singularidad notable de *El castigo del discreto*. Quizá el desenlace bufo, propio de una farsa, explique en parte que Lope desarrollara una tesis tan extraña dentro de su teatro." (*Algunas observaciones acerca del concepto del honor en los siglos XVI y XVII*, in *Revista de filología española*, vol. iii, 1916, p. 366, n. 2.)

"*El castigo del discreto* es una comedia moral que parece reñir con el género dramático español del tiempo de Lope, y aun con los naturales sentimientos de este mismo respecto del modo de tratar a las mujeres. Curar el amor culpable de una dama noble y de respeto a coces y correazos es lo menos caballeresco que ha podido imaginarse." (Cotarelo y Mori, *Obras de Lope de Vega*, Nueva edición, t. iv, p. x.)

her of her infatuation, while the innocent stranger remains unaware of the whole affair. But although following the main outline of the story, Lope recast it in typically Spanish dramatic form. Honor, which does not enter into the Italian story, is, as might be expected, made much of in the *comedia*. In general, the additions and variations of the play were called for by the exigencies of Lope's theatre. The four characters of the *novella* could hardly suffice for a *comedia*; Lope provided additional characters and a subplot of love and jealousy, intrigue and clashes over honor, such as delighted his audiences. The hero of the subplot replaces the friar of the *novella* as the stranger. The new characters are the familiar ones of the gallant, the lady, the latter's punctilious brother, the 'gracioso,' and among others the men and maid servants so necessary to the success of their masters' and mistresses' schemes.

Although Lope was not always successful in his adaptations, one cannot but feel that in this play, by motivating the wife's conduct and omitting the scatological element of the punishment, he improved on his Italian original.<sup>4</sup>

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#### FRENCH SOLEIL

FROM § 76 ov the *Welsh Grammar* ov J. M. Jones (Oxford, 1913), we lern that \**säuelios* iz the basis ov Welsh *haul* 'sun.' This explains the *o* ov French *soleil*. The old form *souleil* corresponds to \**sōliculum*; *soleil* iz a blend ov Celtic and Latin, with *o* from *au* az in *oreille* < *auricula*.

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<sup>4</sup>For a further consideration of this play, including its relation to *comedias* of Lope dealing with conjugal honor, see my edition of it to be published shortly by the *Instituto de las Españas*.

## REVIEWS

*Les Contes de Perrault et les récits parallèles, leurs origines (coutumes primitives et liturgies populaires)*, par P. Saintyves. Paris, E. Nourry, 1923, xxiii + 646 pp.

The author, whose works have not, in this country, received quite the attention they deserve,<sup>1</sup> in writing this folkloristic commentary of Perrault's tales, proposes a new theory to account for the rise of two classes of fairy tales, viz., (1) stories of seasonal origin, (2) stories which have their root in initiation rites. For a third he is inclined to accept M. Bédier's agnosticism. It will be seen that for the first two classes his thesis is in the main an elaboration of the late Andrew Lang's theory, namely, that the modern folk-tales contain features of savagery and must therefore go back to an unknown past of human development. M. Saintyves' contribution lies in his assumption of mummers' plays and initiation rites as the basis of a number of tales, not customs and beliefs pure and simple.

Let us say at once that for a number of tales, especially for the *Cinderella* cycle and the *Blue Beard* type, the author has unquestionably proved his thesis with the material adduced. In other cases, such as the tale of *Little Red Riding Hood* and *Puss in Boots*, his material is insufficient and his argumentation forced. But it is far less with the results that I must register my dissent than with the method followed, which is indeed open to grave objections.

In the first place it may be seriously doubted whether Perrault's versions are always the most convenient *points d'attache* for a commentary of this kind, as some of his tales are badly mutilated, while others, for example his *Belle au bois dormant*, are artificial compounds of more than one type. It certainly would have been well to point out these shortcomings in each case and to put some complete and perfect tale from some other collection at the head of the commentary.

In the second place (and this point is of considerable importance) the author does not appear to realize at all the significance of the so-called fairy tale "types."<sup>2</sup> For not only are the motifs which constitute a folk-tale *not* combined arbitrarily in a kaleidoscopic fashion, but these motifs are so well invented and put together that they form in each case an organic whole which can have been composed only *once*, the product of *one* individual mind, in a definite time and in a definite locality, from which it then started on a migration often over entire continents. This fact, the importance of which can hardly be under-estimated, has been amply proved by the researches of the late O. Dähnhardt<sup>3</sup> and of the Finnish school of folklorists, mostly embodied in the *FF Communications*, works which do not appear in the author's bibliography. But if migration is an ascertained fact, it is clear that a folk-tale

<sup>1</sup> I note the following works: *Les Saints successeurs des dieux*, 1907; *Les Vierges mères et les naissances miraculeuses*, 1908; and *Le Discernement du miracle* 1909, all reviewed in *Zeitsch. d. Vereins f. Volksh.*, XX, 1910, p. 228; *Essais de folklore biblique*, 1922, and a series of articles in the *Revue d'Ethnographie et de Sociologie*.

<sup>2</sup> On p. 256 we find the statement: "Après avoir réuni un nombre important de variantes (*on ne peut songer à les rassembler toutes*), . . ." Certainly, in Paris one should be able to think of collecting if not all, at least a vast majority.

<sup>3</sup> *Natursagen*, Leipzig, 1907-12.

cannot have arisen out of the ritual of any country of the many in which it is found now. It can have developed only out of rites practised in the country of its origin. It would therefore have been advisable to undertake some preliminary researches into the place of origin of each tale, or, if this was found to take too much time, at least to make use of some existing studies which thus traced some types of Perrault's collection. To illustrate what I mean: For the *Cinderella* type we have the admirable work of Miss Cox. A superficial glance at her outlines suffices to show that the most perfect versions of all the three sub-types she discusses are Mediterranean, some East Mediterranean; and a little enquiry into ancient ritual would have revealed the fact that the Mesopotamian *Sacaea* furnish a far better parallel than the Bohemian rite adduced by the author (p. 132). As a matter of fact, this was pointed out by R. Eisler<sup>4</sup> as early as 1910; and since then Sir J. G. Frazer proved that the Jewish Esther myth actually goes back to that Babylonian Carnival.<sup>5</sup> Eisler's work remained unknown to M. Saintyves, and of Sir James' he does not appear to have noticed the full bearing on the *Cinderella* tale.

In a number of points M. Saintyves is more confident of certain assumptions than the known facts would warrant. Thus he sees in the fairies and dwarfs spirits of the wild, rejecting Spencer's and Liebrecht's theory that they are essentially the spirits of the dead (pp. 18-21 and 47). But it would seem that many of the features peculiar to the Irish *side* folk and the German *Hurleminnchen* can be far better explained by the assumption of ancestor cults, while in practice it is usually impossible to distinguish between spirits of the wild and spirits of the dead as both are inextricably interwoven, and this is true for Modern China as it was true for Ancient Greece. The name of Dame Holle may have been introduced into the tale at a late date, and it is therefore not advisable to operate with her too much, not at least until we know more about the history of the fairy tale type in question. Neither was she a water nymph (p. 21), but rather an old earth goddess (recent investigators into ancient Teutonic religion deny her existence altogether, wrongly, I think). It is an unwarranted assumption to claim Germany as the home of *Little Red Riding Hood* so long as the history of the type is unknown. I know a fine Chinese version of this tale.<sup>6</sup> On p. 162 mention could have been made of Přemysl's shoes, still kept in Vysehrad and shown (I have no doubt) to the visitors.

Finally, there are a number of errors and oversights which had better be corrected in a second edition. The Celtic year did not begin on February 1st (p. 16), but on Samhain (November 1st). On p. 193 the father of Catskin is identified with all-devouring Time. Is it necessary to repeat the valid arguments so often put forward to refute the absurd equation *Kronos* = *χρόνος*? Time is nothing to the happy folk of primitive times. They do not give it any thought, much less dream of introducing it into their mummers' plays. The man who invented clocks may have been, as Heine puts it, "ein frierend trauriger Mann," but he certainly was no primitive. The ancient rite (adduced on p. 339) of marching between the severed parts of an animal when taking an oath has no bearing on the subject discussed (the youth swallowed by a monster as an initiation rite).<sup>7</sup> The fables of Marie de France were not translated from Latin into Old English by King Henry I, or any other king. A

<sup>4</sup> *Weltenmantel und Himmelszelt*, München, 1910, p. 166.

<sup>5</sup> Sir J. G. Frazer, *The Scapegoat*, London, 1913, pp. 364 ff.

<sup>6</sup> R. Wilhelm, *Chinesische Volksmärchen*, Jena, 1921, p. 19.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. also S. Reinach, "Le Sacrifice de Tyndare," in *Cultes, Mythes et Religions*, v, Paris, 1923, p. 124.

look at Mall's study<sup>8</sup> or Warnke's critical edition of the work would have explained the matter.

The variety of the material marshalled by the author and the multiplicity of facts adduced will be apparent. Their value will not be diminished by the criticism I thought necessary to make and the reservations I pointed out. In the study of folklore a good deal depends upon the individual viewpoints of the investigators and if anywhere it is here that the old adage holds true: "Tout chemin mène à Rome."

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*Les Relations de voyages du XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle et l'évolution des idées. Contribution à l'étude de la formation de l'esprit du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, par Geoffrey Atkinson. E. Champion, Paris, 1924, vi + 220 pp.

Dr. Atkinson, author of two books on extraordinary voyages in French literature,<sup>1</sup> has just published a third volume on the 'relations de voyages' or 'voyages réels' (*op. cit.*, p. 2), in France during the seventeenth century. In this most recent publication of his, he proposes to examine these books from the angle of their contribution to the history of ideas.

He refers to books on India, Japan, the Near East and Persia, draws many of his examples from books on China, and perhaps a greater part still from those concerning the inhabitants of the New World, attracted to that "exotisme américain" which has already been the subject of several publications by M. G. Chinard.<sup>2</sup> French critics have commented of late, our author says (p. 182), on the apparent break of continuity in thinking between the sixteenth and the eighteenth centuries, a break not explained by the great names of the seventeenth century. M. G. Lanson has pointed out<sup>3</sup> that in lesser 'genres,' such as letters, mémoires, etc., one finds, between 1670 and 1715, traces of the 'esprit philosophique' of the eighteenth century. These ideas also appear in some of the "Imaginary Voyages" by 'libertins' of the seventeenth century, but, notes the author (p. 183), no careful study has been made of the genuine 'relation de voyage' as concerns its contribution to the ideas of the times, and such a study is worth while. M. Chinard<sup>4</sup> had also noted the importance of the 'relations' in this connection. To show the recurrence of ideas between the sixteenth and the eighteenth centuries, Dr. Atkinson cites from Montaigne his philosophical deductions drawn from 'relations,' thus showing the mental process that the author is looking for in the seventeenth century. These well-known deductions are: comment on the dubious blessings of civilization, on the importance attached to tradition and custom, and on the doctrine of the 'bon sauvage' (pp. 10–11). The influence of Las Casas' stories of the New World in the formation of this last idea of Montaigne's, showing as it does how much the latter owes to the 'relations,' has been ably discussed by M. Chinard in *L'Exotisme américain* (pp. 209). Montaigne's rôle as defender of the

<sup>8</sup> *Zeitsch. f. rom. Philologie*, ix, 1885, p. 161.

<sup>1</sup> *The Extraordinary Voyage in French Literature before 1700*, New York, 1920; *The Extraordinary Voyage in French Literature from 1700 to 1720*, Paris, 1922.

<sup>2</sup> *L'Exotisme américain dans la littérature française au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle, d'après Rabelais, Ronsard, Montaigne, etc.* Paris, 1910. *L'Amérique et le rêve exotique dans la littérature française au XVII et au XVIII siècle*. Paris, 1913.

<sup>3</sup> *La formation de l'esprit philosophique du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, in *Revue des Cours et Conférences*, décembre 1907–décembre 1909.

<sup>4</sup> *L'Exotisme américain*, etc., p. 246.

Indian may well bring up the question as to whether, in discussing the tradition of the 'bon sauvage,' enough emphasis has been put on the element of sympathy for the 'under dog,' especially in a century of 'sensibilité,' such as the eighteenth, for instance. All these ideas of Montaigne's do appear in the 'relations' he is studying, and the author notes the critical trend of the books, either by comparisons unfavorable to the French, or by praise of foreign customs. He also takes into account the desire of the traveller to present everything that he has seen as unusual and wholly desirable (pp. 63-65), a state of mind not entirely unknown to modern travellers, and one finds many allusions to liberty and equality in the tomes, although the author rather questions the accuracy of such expressions, to our modern sense, from the pen of men who think in terms of the pomp and circumstance of European courts (p. 26). The author then discusses what he calls the "républiques d'outre-mer," 'république' having a very broad interpretation and being used to refer to native tribes who have suffrage and an elected chief, to French colonies under governmental auspices, to the Christian colonies of the Jesuits for their native converts, and to plans for Huguenot settlements after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, a very informative passage, by the way (pp. 57-62), with excerpts from one of the 'projets' of the times. From these settlements came tales of greater personal and political liberty, and greater business opportunities than Occidental Europe afforded. That some of this material was nothing but advertisement is more than likely (p. 55); we can find examples of that sort of thing in our own times. But the important fact remained that the reading public was getting accustomed to the idea of: "natural and happy social units where absolute monarchy did not exist" (p. 50). We might wish that Dr. Atkinson had given us more detailed results of the great amount of reading that must have gone to the making of this book, to judge by the references and the bibliography, although he disclaims any pretensions of having read all the travel-literature of the period. The first part of the book suffers from condensation, and would gain in clearness by developing certain sections.

After having examined material referring to native races in the Americas, we turn to the opinions of the Orientals—the Chinese. Tales were brought back of their good economic system (pp. 83-84), their lofty moral code attained without the help of Christianity (pp. 87-89), to which at first they were not ill-disposed (p. 96), although they later condemned Christian miracles (pp. 151-152). Comment from a lettered race who separated morality from cult was a novelty, for until the sixteenth century, both sides in the most bitter religious strife in Europe accepted the Bible as the basis of their thinking (p. 110). The author does not bring out very clearly here the distinction he makes between the failure of Mohammedanism to influence European thinking and the palpable influence of Chinese religious thought and philosophy. Other unorthodox ideas found in these 'relations' are: the idea of the immortality of the soul is found among primitive tribes, hence it did not need a revealed religion to give it to man (pp. 137-140), that the Virgin birth is to be found in the traditions of the Orient (pp. 140-144), that Chinese chronology in no way agrees with that of the Bible, etc., all this being accompanied by a running commentary highly unfavorable to Christians, priest or layman alike (pp. 150-159). To these must be added other characteristic ideas of the eighteenth century, such as ideas of progress (pp. 164-168), of the influence of climate on a people (pp. 169-171), of traces of 'sensibilité' (pp. 175-177), the author attributing to this emotion certain criticism of the horrors of war. This scarcely seems conclusive in itself, for it is the only example of the development of that feeling given. In the sixteenth century both Rabelais

and d'Aubigné wrote against war, yet one does not think of them as "des âmes sensibles." One could also differ from the author's statement on page 179 when he says:

"La méthode qui se base sur les expériences et non sur l'autorité, la recherche des faits et non des subtilités de raisonnement, toute la méthode expérimentale qui a rendu possible la science moderne, les façons de penser qui distinguent ceux de nos jours d'avec ceux de la Renaissance, tout cela est déjà indiqué par deux petites phrases de Thevenot."

Surely this is rather a sweeping statement to make concerning Renaissance thinking,—*vide Rabelais and his experiments in dissection*, for instance.

In conclusion, Mr. Atkinson reviews the main points touched upon in his book and ends as follows:

"Les auteurs de voyages semaient depuis un siècle les idées qu'on trouve chez Montaigne, appuyées par l'observation et par l'expérience des voyageurs eux-mêmes. Les nouveaux faits devenaient de plus en plus connus. On les acceptait de plus en plus volontiers.

"Les esprits étaient donc depuis longtemps mis en présence de faits contraires à la tradition. Le terrain se préparait. Il n'appartenait pas à l'érudit Bayle de vulgariser ces idées et de leur donner la fortune éclatante qu'elles devaient avoir au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle. Mais cette fortune, il me semble impossible de l'expliquer complètement si l'on ne tient pas compte de l'influence lente, mais soutenue, exercée sur les esprits du temps par les relations des voyageurs. Le public y trouvait depuis de longues années, des observations, dues à l'expérience de ces voyageurs dans des pays lointains, qui le préparaient insensiblement à accepter les grandes formules d'une époque nouvelle" (pp. 194-195).

The above outline will give an idea of the content and scope of this suggestive contribution to the intellectual history of the period. There is a very full bibliography, although the title of the book by M. Lichtenberger referred to on page 183 is not given, and in the very detailed name-index the word *Dieu* is not listed, a word that appears on many pages of the text.

The book casts an interesting light on our oft-discussed international thinking, and on the contribution made by the knowledge of Oriental and Native American customs and laws in influencing European ideas of government and religion. Truly the international mind is not a new product.

A. LE DUC

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*The Affirmative Particles in French.* By John Gordon Andison, Univ. of Toronto Press, 1923, 104 pp.

Dr. Andison presents in this thesis a detailed historical account of *oui*, to explain "how this affirmative particle in modern French came to exist." The author advances no new theory. Prof. A. Tobler in 1876 was the first to give the original significance of *oil* as the survival of one of the persons of a hypothetical paradigm of affirmatives in Old French: *o je, o tu, o il*, etc.<sup>1</sup> After an historical survey (chap. i), the author examines, as a basis, Latin affirmation (chap. ii). Altho rich in such *certo, certe, ciām, sane, sic, valde, vero, verum*, repetition of pronoun + *istīc*, vicarious verbs, etc., the Latin texts yield no traces of an affirmative peculiar to the province of Gaul. Coming to the Old French texts (chap. iii), the author finds that confusion as to the etymological meaning had soon become prevalent, with the result that *oil* was in many parts of France a generalized affirmative even at the time of the earliest

<sup>1</sup> Darmesteter's *Historical French Grammar*, p. 383, Hartog's Translation, N. Y., 1899.

testimony of it in the language. Dr. Andison supplements the affirmatives with the corresponding negatives *naje*, *ne vos*, etc. He attributes the utmost importance to the adoption of *oil* as the neuter particle (to replace the etymologically correct *oel* <\* *hoc + illum*, the *illud* of classical Latin) in order to show the numerical preponderance of the surviving form (m. and n. sing.—m. plu.), and its final adoption as the general affirmative. A separate chapter (chap. iv) is devoted to *si*, *si fai*, the affirmatives of special cases (the latter also the third person of a hypothetical paradigm).

The author treats most exhaustively the phonological and morphological aspects of the question, the variants in the mss. due to the arbitrary changes of scribes, copyists, and commentators, and discusses, in concluding, the chronology of the subject.

Dr. Andison says (p. 97) that "in the Latin language itself there existed no specific form of affirmation. The immediate results of the absence of this in Latin were, that in order to express affirmation, the people used a great variety of locutions." Rather might one say that the people used such a great variety of locutions for this common linguistic phenomenon of affirmation (as any language will testify) that the texts yield to our eyes no one specific form.

This thesis is a distinct contribution to the bibliography of Romance linguistics.

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## CONTEMPORARY MOVEMENTS IN LITERATURE SPANISH LITERATURE

The increase in the study of modern languages has brought about an intensified interest in the present-day realities of the Latin countries. This development has laid upon scholars and specialists the obligation of emerging occasionally from their delimited fields of study and investigation to establish contact with the modern and current expressions of creative literature in these lands. For this reason THE ROMANTIC REVIEW plans to minister to this need in so far as it may, bringing to the attention of its readers such works or events in the field of modern literature as may be of interest to those who devote themselves to the study of Spanish here. These notes, which will appear from time to time, do not aim to be complete, nor to take the place of publications of a more popular and literary character; their object is rather to serve as a select guide to the literature in the making of the Spanish-speaking nations. Moreover, in the case of the publications of both Spain and Spanish-America it is not always easy to acquire the necessary data, as magazines and adequate organs of diffusion are scarce, and one must resort to the most diverse channels to come by this information.

### I

The literary production of Spain in the past months has been characterized, not so much by the appearance of new writers of distinction, but rather by what one might call a "second blooming" of the principal authors of this generation, who already have an ample production to their credit, and who have achieved a reputation of first order both in Spain and abroad. For several years past these authors had been in a frank decline, so evident that their period of creative capacity was looked upon as ended. A coincidence so general was no doubt due to the spiritual unrest which the War created. But today, with their latest works, these authors have, for the moment at any rate, recaptured the preeminence which was earlier theirs. The case of Benavente is an interesting example. After the production of *La malquerida* in 1913 with which he scored his last great success, he entered on a period of undeniable decadence, losing his hold on the Spanish public at the very moment that he began to be recognized abroad. Now, after a long silence, in which it was rumored that he would write no more for the stage, he has returned to the theatre with an excellent drama in three acts, *La otra honra* (presented September 19, 1924). In it reappear those qualities with which he won his real fame, improved even by simplicity and lack of theatrical effects. The plot deals with the tragedy of matrimonial honor, and is worked out on a basis of kindness and self-sacrifice, the only human virtues that withstand the acid test of Benavente's skepticism.

In general, however, the contemporary theatre is in a moment of sterility. Among the interesting productions of the past year one might note *Concha la limpia* (presented February 14, 1924) of the Quintero brothers. In its very nature their purely local art is unchanging, and does not suffer from the fluctuations of style and changes of taste.

The really valuable contributions of the year must be sought among the novelists. The three principal figures of the contemporary novel, Valle-Inclán, Baroja and

Azorín, have in their latest works recalled the best moments of their past. In the case of Valle-Inclán he has even superseded himself, giving masterly expression to the newest tendencies that are stirring among the younger generation.

Azorín has at last been elected to the Academy, the first of the authors who brought about the mistakenly called literary revolution of '98 to receive this dubious honor. Before it was limited to the dramatists of this generation, Benavente, the Quinteros and Linares Rivas. The fact is, however, that the art of the Quinteros, though undeniably meritorious, is completely in keeping with the purest Spanish traditions. Linares Rivas, who occasionally shocks his audiences with a theme so daring as divorce in Spain, is, by and large, the faithful expression of the ideals of the "enlightened" conservative bourgeois. Benavente was the only modernist and innovator among them; but he had given himself completely over to the public, seeking the easy applause that comes from flattering the most general sentiments of an audience. The capitulation of his earlier ideals opened the doors of the Academy to him. Meanwhile the vacancies in the Academy were being filled by unknown nonentities, or new writers in the traditional manner. Valle-Inclán, Baroja, Unamuno, Juan Ramón Jiménez, Antonio Machado remained unchosen, nor did anyone even think of the possibility of their being elected. The only one of the generation whose candidacy seemed feasible was Azorín; though more because of his conservative position in politics, his character of critic and scholar, and the nature of the material of his art, dealing almost wholly with Spain's past, than because of his artistic originality. And notwithstanding, his application was voted down in 1915. All these years have had to pass before he could at last be approved in 1924.

These reflections have seemed pertinent here because they throw light on the state of Spain's literary life. But the real interest to literature in Azorín's admission to the Academy is the volume he prepared in lieu of the conventional speech of entrance, which is most characteristic of him and the furthest removed that can be imagined from a speech. The book is called *Una hora de España* (Madrid, Caro Raggio, 1924), and is composed of a series of short essays, half poetic and half historical evocations of incidents and figures from Spain's past. Following his own peculiar procedure of seeing the whole in one detail, the eternal in the transient, and the universal in the trivial, he has sought to give in one moment of Spain's existence the eternal Spain, and to illuminate her character and her history. This hour, from 1560 to 1590, is the hour in which Spain reached the turning-point of her destiny, in which her glory reached its height and her decadence set in. Azorín has not written an historical disquisition on this problem. But he has made the reality manifest through insignificant details of different scenes: a room in the Escorial, to which, as to Rome, all roads lead, from which the movements of thousands of beings are ruled by the will of a melancholy, sick old man, Philip the Second; a cell in which a mystic monk spins his books afame with religious ardor, or a reformer conceives new instruments of activity of the Catholic Church; an inn where the chance meeting of a disillusioned traveller, whose own life has been a failure (Cervantes), with a mad, eccentric *hidalgo* brings about the conception of the Quijote. And similarly other scenes, equally subtle, every-day and slight, in which, however, palpitate the most profound historical significance. An event like the destruction of the Invincible Armada is described in a single scene: the bearer of the post who travels without rest or interruption, hastening to deliver the contents of his wallet, wherein is contained the news of the unhappy end of the fleet and so many hopes. With such slight and humble details Azorín conveys the whole historical meaning of this fact which determined the course of future history.

We find ourselves before a work in which Azorín has once more given us the flower of his art, which reached its culmination in *Castilla* (1912), and which, until this latest work, he had achieved only in his *Don Juan* (1922). Azorín's version of the past and the present of Spain (which for him are one and the same thing) is the most intense and original of any contemporary writer, and must be, therefore, one of the first that those who wish to understand Spain should know.

In many things Baroja is the opposed pole to Azorín. For him the past does not exist, unless it be a very near one, like the beginning of the 19th century, which is the background for his series *Memorias de un hombre de acción*. His latest work *Las figuras de cera* (Madrid, Caro Raggio, 1924) continues this series. Baroja is an unflagging producer; he publishes two or three volumes a year. His is a spontaneous literature, sincere to the point of cynicism, full of defects which his enemies never tire of pointing out, and which his admirers have never tried to deny. The fact is that with all these defects it is hard to think of a writer with a more original, more attractive personality than Baroja's. The charm of his originality is heightened by the circumstance of its being perfectly natural and effortless. The pleasure one derives from reading him is even more perplexing in view of the fact that he spares his reader no disagreeable detail. And even more surprising is the absorption with which one follows the action of his novels because they are devoid of what is commonly understood by plot, and are composed of incidental happenings which end in themselves, and lead nowhere. And yet in all this chaos which his works seem at first sight to be, there is a deep underlying unity, and they afford an emotion that is unique. They are filled with a disconcerting sense of life itself, and their very lack of logic and of purpose, together with their infinite variety and surprise, though seemingly in contrast with the purposes of artistic reality—which aims to establish the immutable significance and logic of life—give these works a new unity and depth from which springs their strength.

By his own confession in this latest novel Baroja has tried for the first time in forty novels to consciously dominate the technique of novel-writing. And the strange thing is that when he tried to write a better-constructed novel and to take pains with the form he has been least able to do it. He has discovered the truth of what Galdós, so experienced in the methods of the novel, told him when he published his first novels: that though written spontaneously they had great technique. Just as it has been said that Baroja has no style, when it is impossible to read two lines of his work without recognizing the author immediately. Baroja is a continual surprise, not only for his readers, but for himself as well.

But Baroja does not write only novels. In his novels themselves there is a mingling of the purely esthetic elements such as are the human types, the landscapes, the lyrical or objective emotions with purely cerebral elements. In them the characters and the author himself discuss and pass judgment on everything between heaven and earth. Thus it has easily occurred on different occasions that by merely suppressing the personages and allowing the author to talk alone his novels have been converted into essays. One of Baroja's books published last year, *Divagaciones apasionadas* (Madrid, Caro Raggio, 1924), belongs to this type. It contains a lecture delivered by the author at the Sorbonne in which he discusses himself and his literary labor with a sincerity and originality which could be expected only from him. In it he also passes judgment on other writers. Naturally he says just what he thinks of them, giving expression to his spontaneous reaction and to his personal preferences, without the slightest effort toward detachment; and he often seems disrespectful and unjust. But it would hardly be fair to ask a man who is so unfair toward himself to

be less so toward others. In the same paradoxical and unconventional spirit he discusses such philosophical problems as the definition of culture, or political ones such as the situation of Catalunya. The fact remains that for all his arbitrariness of judgment and his complete disregard for the most firmly established opinions, one often finds in him a basis of truth at which he has arrived thanks to his astonishing ability to divest himself of all prejudices, considerations and respects. And at any event, whether right or wrong, convincing or otherwise, he is always entertaining and amusing.

In contrast to Baroja who takes no thought of art and style—and, if he possesses them, as he does, it is naturally and without effort on his part—the other great contemporary novelist, D. Ramón del Valle-Inclán, novelist and poet, poet always whether in verse or in prose, is the conscious artist of his generation. His production is limited, but exquisite always, and throughout displays a maximum of feeling for all the varied forms of literary beauty. A translation has just appeared in English of his *Sonatas* (*The Pleasant Memories of the Marquis of Bradomin. Four Sonatas*. Translated by May Heywood Broun and Thomas Walsh, New York, Harcourt, Brace, 1924). Although the translators have done all that could be done to make a good translation, it is impossible to translate Valle-Inclán, in whose works every word is an original creation. It is not only a question of the music of the words and rhythm of the prose, but of the suggestive potency and poetic emotion which the words contain, just as in music the purely physical sounds arouse the deepest feelings and associations. For this reason these novels have been called sonatas by their author; the action and the characters, including the Marquis of Bradomin, are the least important in them; the sensations of colors, odors, landscapes which the words call up all unite to form a grand symphony in which the details are lost, and a single emotion, that of the changing seasons in nature and life, remains.

After the *Sonatas* came the series of *Comedias bárbaras* which are full of the beauty and cruelty of the disappearing half-barbarous, half-baronial life of his placid, archaic, medieval Galicia. The last of the series, *Cara de plata* (though chronologically first) appeared in 1923.

The unswerving, undivided absorption of Valle-Inclán in his art, to which he has given his whole life, without a moment's concession to gain or popular favor, has led him to try out the most diverse literary tendencies in the novel, poetry, and the drama, with results that are masterpieces. The common bond between all his work is the seeking after the unusual, that which in one way or another is removed from the vulgar and the prosaic. One of the characteristics of Valle-Inclán's art is the relief which he always gives to the rare and imaginative by means of deliberately introduced notes of crudest realism.

Today, broken in health and far removed, in his native Galicia, from the literary and artistic circles of Madrid that were the breath of life in his nostrils, and of which he was the dynamic center, he is the only one of the contemporary writers who has been able to create new tendencies, and to respond to the newest conceptions of art. One can see this gradual development in several volumes of verse published in the past few years, and, more recently, in his prose works, dialogued novels, which he calls "esperpentos." These works are characterized by the studied cultivation of the ugly and dissonant. They are of a satirical and realistic nature, but the realism is distorted, like figures seen in a concave mirror. The proof of his extraordinary creative gifts lies in the fact that he, whose name for twenty-five years has been synonymous with all that was exquisite and refined, has now created with masterly originality the reverse, a language composed of the most realistic expressions and

slang. It might be called the language of caricature, designed to express the discords and conscious ugliness which is one of the tendencies of the newest feelings in literature as in music and painting. The latest works in this vein are *Luces de Bohemia* (Madrid, 1924) in which appear, thinly veiled and satirically handled, a number of the early Spanish *modernistas*; and two shorter masterpieces, *La rosa de papel* and *La cabeza del Bautista*, in one volume (Madrid, *La novela semanal*, 22 March, 1924). This last is one of the most dramatic and artistically perfect things Valle-Inclán has ever done, and when it was presented on the stage in Madrid it caused a great stir. This potency of Valle-Inclán's maintains his prestige among the newer generation. He is the only one whom they, already in reaction against their predecessors, are willing to call master.

FEDERICO DE ONÍS

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

#### INSTITUTO DE LAS ESPAÑAS

On the evening of March the 18th, Mr. R. H. Williams delivered a most interesting address before the members of the *Instituto*, the students of Spanish in University Extension and the Institute of Arts and Sciences of Columbia University, on "Recent Impressions of Spain." Mr. Williams sketched the place of Spain among the nations of the world, touched upon late political developments, and concluded the hour by showing about 50 slides made from pictures taken during his recent visit to that country.

On May 4th, Professor William R. Shepherd, of the History Department, gave an address before the *Instituto* on "The Spanish Contribution to American Life and Thought." The able and attractive presentation of this subject by the distinguished historian was greatly appreciated by an audience of 500 persons.

The Graduate Spanish Club of Columbia University, organized under the auspices of the *Instituto de las Españas*, held its second meeting on Wednesday evening, April 1st, in Room 500, Philosophy Hall. On this occasion Mr. D. F. Ratcliff read a very interesting paper on the works of Blanco Fombona, basing his observations largely on "El hombre de hierro." Mr. R. H. Williams gave an enlightening talk on the anonymous continuation of "Lazarillo de Tormes" in which he advanced the theory that the manuscript fragment, first reproduced by R. Foulché-Delbosc (*Revue Hispanique*, 1900) and later cited by others, is really a suppressed passage from Chapter XV of the anonymous continuation published in 1555. The prime purpose of the Society is to afford an opportunity for persons interested in Spanish literature to meet and discuss the progress of their research. Members of the *Instituto* are always welcome at these meetings.

The activities of the *Instituto* among the undergraduate students of Spanish in University Extension were organized on February 12th. Mr. O. V. Petty has been appointed faculty representative for the Undergraduate Spanish Club which holds its meetings every other Thursday evening in Room 505, Journalism. The programs are varied in nature, the outstanding number of the evening often being a short address by some guest, while the remainder of the period is devoted to selections rendered by the members.

On the evening of March 21 the Editor had the honor of representing the *Instituto* at the annual dinner given by the Institut des Etudes Françaises. The Istituto di Cultura Italiana was officially represented by its General Secretary, Mr. P. M. Riccio. The guests of honor included E. E. C. Gasqueton, editor of *Echo de Paris*,

and Professor Jean Catel of the Faculty of Montpellier. The occasion was marked by an unusual spirit of enthusiasm, of definiteness of purpose, and of earnest cooperation with the two kindred societies in Italian and Spanish.

Our President, Dr. Homero Seris, is at present attending to the interests of the *Instituto* in Madrid.

Dr. Stephen P. Duggan, a member of our General Executive Council, is at present in the Philippines, acting as the University representative on a Commission created by the U. S. government to make a survey of educational conditions in the Islands. After this work is concluded in May, Dr. Duggan will continue on a world tour which will last through the summer.

As the library of the *Instituto* is now in charge of Mr. D. F. Ratcliff, inquiries concerning it should be addressed to him, care of Columbia University, New York City. Mr. William R. Quynn has been appointed Assistant General Secretary of the *Instituto*.

Our office is in urgent need of a few copies of *La Enseñanza de Lenguas Modernas en los Estados Unidos* by Mr. L. A. Wilkins, which was issued by the *Instituto* in 1922. As the edition has been exhausted, those willing to contribute their copies will perform a real service to the organization by mailing same to the General Secretary.

An important step in the general administration of our publications is the recent agreement entered into with the Columbia University Press whereby the latter has assumed the responsibility for advertising and distributing our publications. The Columbia University Press will act as distributing agent solely.

Señora Isabel O. de Palencia of Madrid, President of the National Feminist Association of Spain, is the official lecturer of the *Instituto* for the present year. Through the cooperation of our office an itinerary of over 40 appointments has been arranged for her which includes many of the leading colleges and universities of the United States. Señora Palencia has brought with her a fine collection of Spanish laces and shawls for display in her lectures.

An increasing interest in things Hispanic is obvious from the large number of notices of trips to Spain received recently. Messrs. Barlow and Piñol, in charge of the "Fifth Annual Tour" of the *Instituto*, wish to announce that the success of the tour is now assured.

Mrs. Helen C. Barden has recently donated to the *Instituto* a sketch by an American artist, Mr. Avery Sharpe, of the patio in which Cervantes is reputed to have written part of *Don Quijote*. Mrs. Barden writes:

"This sketch of the Court Yard where Cervantes penned that part of 'Don Quijote' while imprisoned there, immortalized in history, and so dear to the Spanish heart, was made in a moment of sudden inspiration by the artist, Avery Sharpe, about the year 1890. On his return to America he presented it to my daughter, an accomplished Spanish scholar, who has since passed away. I can think of no more suitable resting place for her little treasure than the *Instituto de las Españas en los Estados Unidos*, to which I am indebted for much assistance and pleasure in the delightful study of their charming languages, to which I hope to give daily attention while life and energy remain."

FRANK CALLCOTT,  
*Editor, Publications*

